

# **Material and Ideational Drivers in EU Policy towards the MENA, 1995-2010**

**By:**

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### ***Declaration of Authorship***

I, Pepijn M.J. van Houwelingen, hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are entirely my own. Where I have consulted to work of others this is always clearly indicated.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke, written over a horizontal line.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

10 July 2014

## ***Abstract***

The argument advanced in this thesis is that analysis of international relations would benefit from greater consideration of how material and ideational forces coexist in foreign policy. All too often academic studies seek to assert how material or ideational forces ‘trump’ one another, to the detriment of their analysis. In this light we test the hypothesis that the EU’s policies towards the Middle East and North Africa are best explained by a joint dynamic between principled beliefs (pertaining to democracy and human rights) and materialist self-interest. As a causal mechanism to connect these variables to EU behaviour our hypothesis points to the causal beliefs of foreign policy elites, which influence the strategies chosen to pursue objectives. In this manner we propose a theoretical perspective with substantive ideational and material elements, rooted in the ‘soft rationalist’ approach advanced by Goldstein and Keohane (1993). Our engagement with the empirical data reveals a number of challenges that point towards future theoretical refinement, as it is shown that in light of persistent difficulties the EU progressively yielded to short-term pressures in which it was more difficult to trace our independent variables. Yet our main conclusion is that, as hypothesised, EU foreign policy towards the Mediterranean was neither an example of how norms and values lead to the transcendence of self-interests nor a case of disingenuous normative packaging. Thus, the analysis presented in this thesis strengthens the case for a synthesised perspective, suggesting that EU policy towards the MENA has for the most part evinced a marriage of material and ideational drivers under the explicit causal belief that they can be pursued in conjunction with one another. On this basis we formulate a number of recommendations for further theorising on ideational-material interaction in international relations scholarship.

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## *Abbreviations and Acronyms*

AA	Association Agreement
ALF	Anna Lindh Foundation
AP	Action Plan
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CoR	Committee of the Regions
CSCE	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
EC	European Community
EEAS	European External Action Service
EFP	EU Foreign Policy
EIB	European Investment Bank
EIDHR	European Initiative/Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
EMHRN	Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network
EMP	Euro-Mediterranean Partnership
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
ENPI	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
EP	European Parliament
ESC	Economic and Social Committee
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
EU	European Union
EuroMeSCo	Euro-Mediterranean Study Commission
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FEMIP	Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership
FEMISE	Forum Euroméditerranéen des Instituts de Sciences Économiques
FTZ	Free Trade Zone
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
HRDN	Human Rights and Democracy Network
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IR	International Relations
JHA	Justice and Home Affairs



MDP	MEDA Democracy Programme
MEDA	Mesures d'accompagnement financières et techniques
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MEPP	Middle East Peace Process
MFN	Most Favoured Nation
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NIF	Neighbourhood Investment Facility
NIP	National Indicative Plan
PA	Palestinian Authority
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organisation
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
TEU	Treaty on European Union
UfM	Union for the Mediterranean
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WB	World Bank
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WTO	World Trade Organisation

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# Introduction

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## *Ideas and Material Interests*

This thesis deals with the European Union's engagement in international affairs. More specifically, we are interested in the role of material and ideational forces in EU foreign policy (EFP) towards the Mediterranean region.<sup>1</sup> Building on an extensive collection of empirical materials, this thesis makes a contribution to the literature by investigating the hypothesis that a dual perspective (based on a merger of key variables highlighted in divergent streams of the EFP literature) provides a better explanation of the Union's Mediterranean policy than what is offered by many of the orthodox, more polarised accounts. In this manner we are able to build upon and enrich the existing literature through thorough empirical analysis of a theoretically ambitious hypothesis.

Why does this topic merit our attention? To answer this question it is necessary to refer to some of the relevant academic literature. The relationship between ideas<sup>2</sup> and material forces has been a recurrent theme throughout the history of philosophy and social science (see for an inclusive overview Hall, 1993). With respect

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<sup>1</sup> Note on terminology: this thesis uses the terms MENA, Mediterranean, 'the south' and Maghreb/Mashriq interchangeably. In all cases they refer to the European Union's southern and eastern Mediterranean non-member state partners in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. Additionally, we use the terms EU, Europe and 'the Union' interchangeably. These terms refer to the European Union – its scope (i.e. the number of member states) dependent on the specific historical context. Finally, as explained later on we take a holistic view of EFP rather than focusing exclusively on the CFSP/CSDP.

<sup>2</sup> Defined for now as: "actors' beliefs, preferences, knowledge, understandings, and expectations" (Lieberman, 2002, p. 697). We shall return to the definition of ideas in Chapter II.

to our discipline of International Relations (IR), it is no exaggeration to say that this theme has consistently taken a prominent position in conceptual debates. While it is difficult to generalise when discussing a wide array of often thoughtful and nuanced authors, it is possible to delineate certain theoretical camps or groupings of likeminded discussants. In the early days of IR this was reflected in the so-called idealism-realism debate. Even though an increasing degree of theoretical diversity has been added throughout the years, today we can still identify a split, referred to by e.g. Keohane as between ‘reflectivists’ and ‘rationalists’ (1988). Broadly speaking, whilst the former emphasise the importance of social dynamics (ideas) in explaining international politics, the latter utilise theories with their basis in rational choice to highlight actors’ pursuit of (materialistic) self-interest.

Whilst acknowledging a great diversity of perspectives, if we accept that in the abstract a distinction can be made between core approaches to IR it is possible to note an enduring degree of polarisation between idealists (or constructivists) and materialists (realists). There is, of course, a middle ground between the extremes in this debate, and it is exactly here that (empirical) analysis could make a valuable contribution to evaluating the different perspectives’ mutual complementarities (Sil & Katzenstein, 2010). As Steve Wood argues: “If constructivism or realism were to escape their own dogmas or path-dependencies, each would accept that in a given context or instance the other offered a more plausible interpretation, explanation or method, or that mergers might be possible” (2011, p. 250). Remarkably, however, relatively few researchers have taken up exploring the possibilities for strengthening our knowledge of international politics by way of more ‘pragmatic’ usage of IR theory and a clear positioning within the theoretical middle ground.<sup>3</sup> Several commentators have lamented

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<sup>3</sup> On pragmatism see e.g. Barnett & Duvall (2005); Albert & Kopp-Malek (2002).

this state of affairs: “at a time when we have two major theoretical traditions in IR that emphasize material and social forces respectively, we have very little attempt to examine the relationship between those forces as they play out in the real world of international relations” (Sørensen, 2008, p. 6). In this vein others speak of the “near-absence of inter-paradigmatic dialogue” and the fact that “IR theory and EU studies face a situation of growing mutual insularity among authors that write in different paradigms” (Kerremans & Orbie, 2013, p. 495; see also Hyde-Price, 2013; Meyer & Strickmann, 2011; Walker, 2010; Glenn, 2009; Legro, 2005).

This thesis takes as its starting point the idealist-materialist debate in IR and addresses the relationship between the different types of variables emphasised by the two schools of thought. We thus position ourselves explicitly in the middle ground in order to test the hypothesis that ideas and material variables are jointly responsible for driving foreign policy. We aim to offer a way to gain broader insight into the complexities of our case than what could be achieved by a more orthodox view by exploring interactions between key variables from the discipline of IR. Specifically, we build on constructivist and realist conceptualisations of EFP, united through the theory of international relations put forward by Goldstein and Keohane (1993), to formulate and test our hypothesis.

By its very nature this is likely to be a theoretically and methodologically challenging enterprise, fraught with considerable uncertainty due to its inherent complexity and the broadness of its outlook (Sil & Katzenstein, 2010). Yet we believe that it is a worthwhile endeavour irrespective of these challenges, for particularly through careful empirical analysis an inclusive approach promises to advance our insight into the interrelated dynamics associated with two major forces highlighted in IR theory. It is important to recognise the limitations of a single-author study focusing on a

singular actor (if we may say this of the European Union in all its complexity). For this reason we aim to be as open and self-reflective about our methods as possible, and we will discuss at length what methodological tests will be undertaken to analyse our hypothesis and what the related risks and benefits are.

At this point we have explained only in part what is behind this thesis' orientation. For why study the European Union, of all possible actors? The answer to this question can be found in the trajectory of studies on EU foreign policy and the manner in which the idealist-realist dichotomy has been manifest in scholarship on the EU.

Initial endeavours to study EFP often focused on the question of whether a common foreign policy “worthy of the name” must wait for “a federal European state”, thereby constantly raising existential questions for scholars in this field (Hill, 1993, p. 316). As the member states pooled more responsibilities in their common institutions, however, and especially since the signing of the Treaty on European Union in 1992, a general consensus has emerged that, for better or for worse, the EU *does* have a foreign policy of sorts and that this constitutes a valid sub-field for research in IR. On this basis works on EU foreign policy have steadily grown in number over the years, producing a rich landscape with many different theoretical and empirical perspectives.<sup>4</sup> Within this broad field, one strongly prevalent theme has been that of the Union's nature as an international actor, as an important mission for scholars of EFP has been to shed light on what kind of international actor or power the European Union is (or could be) given its remarkable status as a grouping of states. Classifications of the EU have resultantly been in no short supply, including, to give some examples, ‘civilian power’ (Duchêne, 1973; 1972; see also Bull, 1982), ‘normative power’ (Manners, 2008; 2002), ‘imperial

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<sup>4</sup> See Smith (2009) for an overview.

power’ (Sepos, 2013; Zielonka, 2008; 2007), ‘small power’ (Toje, 2010) and even ‘metrosexual superpower’ (Khanna, 2004).

Many authors concerned with this question have tried to emphasise what is unique about the EU’s engagement in international affairs. This has put forward actor-specific variables such as beliefs, identity and culture in accounts of the Union’s foreign policy, leading to a notable degree of emphasis on the ideational inputs to the EU and to EFP. A broad variety of perspectives has adopted such a focus – examples include studies on socialisation, institutionalisation and common European understandings (Jørgensen, 1999); projection of an ‘EUtopia’ to the rest of the world (Nicolaidis & Howse, 2002); a ‘civilising’ process (Linklater, 2005), strategic culture (Meyer, 2005); the bearing of EU identity on conflict transformation (Pace, 2008; Diez & Pace, 2007; Diez, 2002); normative institutionalism (Thomas, 2009); and, more prescriptively, the EU’s capacity to become “a regional engine for the world common good” (Dunne, 2008, p. 14; see also Lerch & Schwellnus, 2006; Teló, 2006). In light of this broad convergence it has been said that “many – probably, most – analysts have come to posit a pre-eminence of ideational dynamics as key to the EU’s distinctiveness as an international actor” (Youngs, 2004, p. 415).<sup>5</sup> The EU has often been viewed as a *sui generis* actor, and some observers have gone so far as to argue that it can be understood as a post-Westphalian ‘force for good’ that has relinquished zero-sum self-interest – to cite Thomas Diez: “the representation of Europe as a force for peace and well-being is nearly consensual” (2005, p. 620). Of course, as alluded to above, this is not to claim that there has been insubstantial theoretical variation in studies on the EU, but if a single

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<sup>5</sup> Our argument pertains specifically to the literature on the EU’s external engagement, yet notions like ideas and identity have also been prominent in studies focused on internal processes. See e.g. Green (2007); McLaren (2006); Shore (2000).

stream of influential work could be identified in the past two decades it does appear to verge towards the ideational rather than the material side of the conceptual spectrum.

One particularly notable argument within the literature is that of the EU as a ‘normative power’ (Manners, 2002). At heart this perspective seeks to demonstrate how the European Union engages in a value-based foreign policy rather pursuing relative (material) gains. The source of this orientation is argued to be the EU’s deeply embedded identity. As Ian Manners has said: “the EU exists as being different to pre-existing political forms, and ... this particular difference predisposes it to act in a normative way” (ibid., p. 242). This approach has become a widely recognised point of reference, and the emphasis on the importance of European values has found deep resonance in the broader literature (Forsberg, 2011; Nunes, 2011; Whitman, 2011; De Zutter, 2010; Laïdi, 2008; Tocci, 2008; Scheipers & Sicurelli, 2007; Lerch & Schweltnus, 2006).

The ideational/normative strand of the literature has persuasively shown how ideational factors such as norms and identity have played a large role in the European Union’s foreign policy. Conversely, realists have put emphasis on the material aspects of EFP, arguing that the EU is at its core a tool to secure the collective economic interests of its member states (Costalli, 2009; Hyde-Price, 2008; 2006; Zimmermann, 2007). In this sense it can be argued that two relatively polarised visions of the EU exist in the literature (see also Chapter II). Given that both have their own strengths and weaknesses, each illuminating particular pieces of the EU puzzle, the present thesis has as its goal to investigate whether a fusion of the two perspectives, based on the theory iterated by Goldstein and Keohane (1993), could provide us with a more complete picture. After all, in the abstract most authors would likely accept Lisbeth Aggestam’s suggestion that “material interests and ethical considerations tend to be intertwined”



(2008, p. 8; see also Barbé & Johansson-Nogués, 2008), but by what kind of mechanisms and in what specific ways this has been the case for the European Union's foreign policy remains somewhat of a mystery. Whilst it is true that several authors have been concerned with exactly this type of research question (see Kerremans & Orbie, 2013 and Chapter II), it remains a work in progress as there is still much room for thorough empirical investigation to test particular hypotheses regarding material-ideational joint action as a driver of EU foreign policy (Hyde-Price, 2013). This is especially so given that there is not yet a significant body of empirical work based on inclusive theoretical perspectives, which is why our comprehensive empirical focus has a strong potential to clarify and improve some of the key benefits and explanatory capabilities of such an approach.

It is important to emphasise that we have chosen to focus on the Union's *actions* (or outputs) rather than on *internal dynamics*. In doing so we are inspired by authors like Ginsberg (2001) and Tocci (2008) who argue that we need to look beyond what the EU *is* and take into consideration what it *does*. While institutionalist, intergovernmentalist or Europeanisation-focused studies have been highly useful to broaden our insight into the European foreign policy making process (see e.g. Tonra, 2001; Cameron, 1999; McGoldrick, 1997; Rummel, 1997; Pfetsch, 1994; Nuttall, 1992), an outward-looking orientation can be helpful on several levels. First, theoretically it can be said that in some of the normative literature there has been a tendency to focus on identity and discourses – oftentimes acknowledging practical issues and contradictions but primarily as an afterthought rather than as an integral part of the analysis (e.g. Forsberg, 2011; Nunes, 2011; Rogers, 2009; Kelley, 2004). To complete the picture and to understand better how the EU manifests itself in the international arena, we believe that there is added value in looking more substantively at

how beliefs and values (ideas) relate to actions and thus to move away from ‘EUtopian’ descriptions (we borrow here the term utilised by Nicolaïdis & Howse, 2002). The goal of this is not to capitalise on gaps between words and deeds but rather to problematise appraisals of the EU based on only one element of a complex set of drivers and determinants.

Second, we believe that a focus on the Union’s actions and their external effects provides a useful basis for building a practical understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the EU as a foreign policy actor. After all, it allows us to understand the barriers, limitations and intervening variables that come into play at the stage of actualising ambitions (normative or otherwise). This will allow us to focus on concrete policy-making issues in our analysis and thereby to attempt to make a contribution to the clarification of important practical issues. As Cavatorta and Pace write: “What is crucially missing is a systematic analysis of how the EU conducts its external affairs on the ground within the larger policy frameworks that it has adopted” (2010, p. 582). Thus, in addition to our effort to provide a theoretically-minded corrective to unduly restrictive accounts of IR, we also hope to shed light onto some of the dilemmas that are inherent to our case study itself. In this regard our ambitious theoretical perspective will facilitate a novel way of understanding the main challenges.

With this in mind we will now turn to explaining our choice for examining the EU’s relations with its neighbours in North Africa and the Middle East.

## **Europe and its Mediterranean Neighbours**

As we have said, our focus lies with the EU’s policies towards its Mediterranean neighbours. While no case study could ever be one hundred percent representative for the complex totality of social, economic and political relations maintained by an actor,

we justify our choice for the Middle East and North Africa on the basis of two important arguments. The first of these is mostly instrumental, given that the Mediterranean region has been an important site for common European foreign policy. Against the backdrop of factors such as its close vicinity, colonial histories and geopolitical interdependencies (see Dosenrode & Stukbjær, 2002; Ifestos, 1987), Europe's deep connection to the countries across what the Romans used to call *mare nostrum* is most clearly expressed in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP, also known as the Barcelona Process) of 1995 and the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) of 2003-04 (supplemented by the Union for the Mediterranean [UfM]). These institutionalised frameworks have served as the main avenues for European actions towards the south, which is why they shall constitute our primary object of study in this thesis. Comprising economic, political, security and socio-cultural policies, they serve as a good and relatively comprehensive measure of the various faces of EFP. As the recipient of a significant degree of European political attention and various relatively comprehensive programmes, the Mediterranean region thus provides a fruitful case study for coming to a deeper understanding of some important aspects of the EU's external relations.

The second reason for choosing Euro-Med relations is inherent to the case itself, as it pertains to the particulars of the Union's southern neighbours. The Mediterranean Sea has been described as 'Europe's Rio Grande' (King, 1998), and prominent authors have identified a 'partnership vs. hegemony' paradox in EU policies towards the south (Bechev & Nicolaïdis, 2010). In the terms utilised by the current thesis this could be reconceptualised as a dynamic between ideas and material self-interest, but notwithstanding a general recognition of this dynamic it is notable that many analysts have tended to favour what Attinà (2003) calls the 'socialisation/inclusion view' of

Euro-Med relations. This has led many authors to focus on issues such as regional community building, socialisation, and the promotion of human rights and democracy (e.g. Peters, 2012; Tassinari & Holm, 2010; Adler & Crawford, 2006; Attinà, 2006; Volpi, 2004). Accordingly it can be said that despite an impressive breadth of perspectives, the situation that we have identified in IR and the field of EFP studies is reflected in the Euro-Med literature. As Stefano Costalli put it: “the Barcelona Process and the European Neighbourhood Policy ... have often been considered almost ‘inherently constructivist’ policies” (2009, p. 323). This is not to say that self-conscious alternative views do not exist (e.g. Costalli, 2009; Pace, 2009; Bicchi, 2007; Youngs, 2004; Sangiovanni, 2003; we will discuss them further in this thesis), but in a wider sense it does appear to be the case that comparatively more limited effort has been made to define and understand the potential interplay or joint operation between ideational and material drivers. Richard Youngs’ following remarks are therefore particularly applicable to Euro-Med relations:

*Rationalist self-interest has not been written out of the script completely; rather analysts have judged it necessary to demonstrate that such logic does not capture the whole story of European foreign policy. In practice, however, recent work on EU external relations has been far better at chronicling the attenuation of power politics than at exploring the precise nature of the co-existence between strategic [rationalist] and ideational dynamics” (2004, p. 419, author’s emphasis).*

It is in focusing on this apparent oversight within the literature and addressing it on the basis of an especially rich set of primary and secondary sources that this thesis aspires

to make a contribution not only to the broad fields of IR and EFP but also to the Euro-Mediterranean niche. By testing our theoretically-driven hypothesis with a thoroughgoing empirical investigation it will thus be possible to assess the EU's behaviour towards its southern neighbours more fully than in theoretically or empirically more limited studies.

Events over the past few years have been particularly instrumental in bringing some of the relevant quandaries to the fore. An old quip holds that if one were asked to prepare a political speech a year in advance it would always be a possibility to start by mentioning the 'latest' crisis in the Middle East. Unrest in this region, said to be plagued by an 'Arab Malaise'<sup>6</sup>, thus appears as not particularly uncommon, but there was something unprecedented about the wave of popular anger that was unchained after Tunisian street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi's act of self-immolation (17 December 2010) and his subsequent death (4 January 2011). Turbulence around the Arab world followed; large demonstrations led to the exile and imprisonment of the leaders of Tunisia and Egypt respectively. This was unique in the post-independence historical trajectory of these countries, producing a sense that the Middle East as a region might be undergoing a process similar to Eastern Europe's opening up in the early 1990s. However, this hope was belied when a military dimension was introduced: UN-backed NATO intervention in support of armed Libyan rebels eventually led to the overthrow of Muammar Qadhafi's regime, and Colonel Qadhafi himself was killed shortly after; Libya has seen much unrest since. This could also be said for Egypt, where presidential

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<sup>6</sup> To cite Samir Kassir's *Being Arab* (2006, p. 1): "What's distinctive about the Arab malaise is that it afflicts people who one would imagine would be unaffected by such a crisis, and that it manifests itself more in perceptions and feelings than in statistics, starting with the very widespread and deeply seated feeling that Arabs have no future, no way of improving their condition. Faced with the protean and apparently incurable evil eating away at their world, the only remedy would be individual flight, if such a thing were possible."

elections were held only to be made undone by the military some time later. In addition, the situation in Syria has continuously escalated and shows little signs of improvement at the time of writing.<sup>7</sup> It is therefore not unambiguously clear at this point in time whether the ‘Arab Spring’ has structurally changed socio-political parameters in the region in a favourable manner, or whether familiar dynamics will retrench over time without fundamental alteration.

The significance of these events for the European Union, and for this thesis, is that after about eighteen years of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership – which has had as its goal the creation of an area of ‘peace, stability, and shared prosperity’ (Euro-Med Partnership, 1995) – reality appears starkly at odds with the Union’s ambitions. Perhaps most notably, the core objective of constructing a Euro-Mediterranean free trade area by 2010, thought to economically benefit the MENA, has not been achieved. As the Arab League’s head Amr Moussa has said: “the Arab soul is broken by poverty, unemployment and general recession” (Al Jazeera, 2011a). This is not meant as an *ad hominem* criticism of the EU, and we do not wish to suggest that the European Union should be held responsible or that it had the means to single-handedly improve the situation. Yet the ‘Arab Spring’ *did* raise the question of whether Europe could not have done more to help the region. This was indirectly admitted in a *mea culpa* of sorts when enlargement and neighbourhood policy Commissioner Štefan Füle said that Europe “must show humility about the past” (EU Observer, 2011). French scholar Gilles Keppel put it more bluntly, saying that there was “a lot of halal chicken coming home to roost” (cited in Pagano, 2011). The events of spring 2011 thus inspired a degree of soul-

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<sup>7</sup> This is not to mention the Israeli-Palestinian situation, where, according to a still relevant text adopted by the European Parliament in 2012, settlement construction and expansion as well as “house demolitions, evictions and forced displacement of Palestinians”, plus the launching of Qassam rockets from Gaza, continue to be the order of the day (2012a, §10).

searching, and this seems to be a good point in time to consider a broad range of variables so that we can come to a realistic assessment of the various dimensions of Euro-Med interaction. That is to say: was Mr. Füle right to urge for ‘humility’, and (why) was this necessary?

In sum, the topic of Euro-Mediterranean relations provides a rich and potentially fruitful field of analysis. It promises to serve as an excellent case study for our inquiry into ideational-material dynamics in international affairs as it exhibits some of the core features of the disciplinary polarisation that in our view legitimates such a research programme. In addition, EU policy towards the south is an important and interesting case in its own right given the extensive nature of EU involvement in the MENA region and the very serious problems still prevalent there. In this light there exist significant potentialities for contributing to the literature with our current theoretical perspective, which aims to synthesise the strengths of divergent conceptual strands of thought. Against the backdrop of these motivations we shall now proceed to define our research question.

### ***Research Question***

As we have seen, this thesis is rooted in the idealist-materialist debate in IR and seeks to occupy a theoretical middle ground. Whilst this will be more elaborately discussed in the following chapter, we have indicated how Euro-Mediterranean politics promises to be a useful case study for undertaking our analysis. Accordingly the focus of this thesis can be summarised as an inquiry into the role of idealist and materialist dynamics in the European Union’s policy towards its Mediterranean neighbours.

On this basis we must now posit our main research question:

*What drives the EU's policies towards the MENA; European ideas, the EU's material interests, or some combination of both?*

The hypothesis that we will test in response to this question is that ideas *as well as* material interests drive the EU's Mediterranean policies, operating jointly to produce EU behaviour. In other words, our hypothesis is that neither material interests nor European ideas alone are *sufficient* to explain the EU's interactions with the Mediterranean. However, each is *necessary*, so that a combined perspective provides the best explanation (the italicised terminology is derived from van Evera, 1997). In this hypothesis ideas and material interests are the independent variables that together cause the dependent variable of EU policy. This outlook is based upon our reading of constructivist and realist perspectives on EFP as well as the theory put forth by Goldstein and Keohane (1993), to be discussed at length in Chapter II. It is there that we will also further specify and operationalise the terms put forth in our hypothesis.

A final remark concerns the scope of our research question. As our case studies we will consider the Union's two overarching policy frameworks for the MENA: the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the European Neighbourhood Policy. In addition, we will take into account the EU's more recent supplement to the ENP: the Union for the Mediterranean. This delimits the main focus of our study to the period 1995-2010 (with some limited spill-overs), whilst also excluding individual member state policies as well as EU actions towards non-EMP actors (e.g. the eastern neighbours included in the ENP). This is still a relatively broad scope, though it could nevertheless be argued that separating e.g. member state policies from EU actions imposes an artificial boundary. We acknowledge this fact, but for the reasons outlined above – and on the basis of research on the 'actorness' of the EU (e.g. Regelsberger, 2007; Bretherton &



Vogler, 2006; Keukeleire, 2003; Jupille & Caporaso, 1998; Allen & Smith, 1990) – we believe that a focus on the relatively contiguous topic of EU-Med relations is warranted for our current purposes.

## ***Conclusion***

We have argued that a division between theoretical approaches that emphasize *either* ideas *or* material interests is identifiable within the discipline of IR. While exceptions can be found, a degree of polarisation has divided analysts of international affairs, who have generally undertaken mostly limited efforts at meeting in the middle ground. This thesis hopes to add to the debate by investigating the possibilities for a broader and more inclusive research orientation. It thus adds to the literature in its attempt to test the potentialities for fusing the strengths of typically separated explanatory variables. The case study chosen for this effort is the European Union, specifically its policies towards the Middle East and North Africa. Whilst this is instrumentally appealing owing to the relative prevalence of ideational approaches to studying EU foreign policy, it is also inherently valuable due to the particulars of Euro-Mediterranean politics and the various issues that are at stake in this relationship.

In the next chapter we discuss the theoretical basis for our research, which will enable a more precise definition of our key terms. Specifically, we identify a causal mechanism (in the form of causal beliefs) that links our independent variables to EU action. Chapter II also addresses the methodology that will be utilised to test our hypothesis. As we will see, a process tracing approach has been selected in light of the various empirical tests it facilitates. A clear understanding of our approach and these tests will allow us to conduct our analysis with a high degree of self-awareness and a good insight into the reliability of our findings.

In Chapter III we commence our empirical analysis. The chapter considers the period 1995-2003, demonstrating how our approach holds up in light of the EU's policies within the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership during this time. We show how both material and ideational variables are indispensable to account for the EU's behaviour towards the MENA, particularly given the way in which they were united in the EMP through the EU's 'modernisation' approach (in its causal beliefs). In this manner a joint perspective provides a fuller and more satisfactory explanation of the EU's policies than rival approaches, but we do note that a number of challenges remain. Therefore, we conclude Chapter III with the observation that the evidence supports the claim that our independent variables are *necessary*, but more data is needed to prove that they are *sufficient*.

Chapter IV aims to add to our evidential basis, and thereby to shed more light on some of the outstanding questions, by considering the European Neighbourhood Policy since 2003. We find strong evidence in support of our hypothesis, but the evidence also shows that there was a certain tendency in the ENP away from the dynamics witnessed previously. Whilst we argue that this does not falsify our hypothesis, it does require us to critically assess future policy in order to determine whether what we observed represented an anomaly or a genuine trend. Thus, Chapter IV underlines the continued relevance of ideational and material variables but also points to a number of contradictions in EFP.

Our final empirical investigation, Chapter V, follows up on these observations as it assesses the Union for the Mediterranean. Whilst this programme represents only a smaller element of the broad set of EU Mediterranean policies, it further underlines some of the dynamics witnessed in Chapter IV. Specifically, the trend signalled by the most recent EU policies is one that moves away from strategic drivers, as represented

by our independent variables, towards a more ad-hoc, less clearly thought through approach. In this sense we highlight that a true crisis existed in EU policy in the years leading up to the Arab Spring, posing some challenges to theoretical approaches that assume significant strategic action by the EU – as both idealists and realists have done.

Chapter VI concludes this thesis by bringing together our findings. We argue that our hypothesis could be sustained in light of the evidence, given that at each stage a joint perspective has provided a better explanation of EFP than either a material or an ideational approach in isolation. However, we also conclude that the explanatory power of our approach appears greater at the start of the EMP and somewhat diminishes over time, as the EU became less determined and more confused in its policies towards the south. In this context our independent variables prove to be ‘necessary but not sufficient’ for explaining EU policies towards the MENA. This situation will be explained with reference to our causal mechanism as well as the validity of some of the assumptions made within idealist and realist approaches, as alluded to above. Finally, we highlight the ‘lessons learned’ from this study in both a theoretical and a practical sense.

## - II -

# Theoretical and Methodological Framework

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This chapter provides the theoretical and methodological basis for the empirical analysis that will be undertaken in the following chapters of this thesis. We begin with a discussion of realism and its meaning for studies of EU foreign policy before proceeding with an equivalent treatment of idealism. The chapter then proposes an alternative, bifocal perspective, based on the perspective outlined by Goldstein and Keohane (1993). We finish by detailing a methodological framework that will facilitate thorough and reliable empirical analysis.

Let us make one important remark before we begin our theoretical explorations. As we have stressed in Chapter I, the field of IR is marked by a great degree of diversity of approaches, both *between* and *within* the dominant paradigms. It is therefore not our aim in this place to provide an exhaustive treatment of the discipline's theoretical heterogeneity. Rather, we draw on the most important tendencies within idealism and realism, fully aware of the fact that such an endeavour requires a degree of abstraction. Despite significant differences between the various authors whom we draw upon, it is our contention that underneath these differences there lies a fundamental clash between those who privilege ideational dynamics and those who look chiefly to material interests for explaining international political phenomena. The theorists discussed in the following two sections are thus considered primarily insofar as they provide authoritative illustrations of realism and idealism respectively. Whilst the clarity of our argument is therefore inevitably gained at the expense of some interesting debates

within the two paradigms, we believe this sacrifice justified in light of our overarching ambition to investigate possibilities for utilising a balanced theoretical perspective.

### ***Political Realism: Relative Power and Material Interests***

#### **Theoretical Foundations**

The roots of realism as a paradigm for the study of international relations are often traced back to several classical authors and an apparent agreement between them on the basic contours of (international) politics. For example, in an extensive study on Thucydides, Clausewitz and Morgenthau, Richard Ned Lebow notes that his “most striking finding is the extent to which they share remarkably similar understandings ... These commonalities constitute the core wisdom of a philosophical tradition that transcends time, context and place in a different sense than understood by neo-positivist social science. Their arguments ... provide access to a deeper wisdom” (2003, p. 40). Perhaps as a consequence of this remarkably long lifespan and seemingly esoteric core, there has been a great deal of confusion regarding the views of those authors considered to be realists. They have been said to be morally irresponsible, obsessed with power, unimaginative, or simply too pessimistic – as Robert Gilpin has written: “no one loves a political realist” (1996).

Realism is, indeed, a very ‘broad church’, but to begin it is possible to identify three quintessential assumptions.<sup>8</sup> First and foremost, realists posit that the international

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<sup>8</sup> There are, of course, different ways of classifying realism’s assumptions. For example, Schweller discusses seven propositions on one occasion (1997, p. 927), and four ‘key tenets’ on another (Schweller & Priess, 1997, p. 6). Schweller’s seven comprise a comprehensive alternative to the three discussed in this chapter: 1) humans do not face one another as individuals, but as members of a group; 2) international politics take place in a state of anarchy; 3) power is necessary to secure any political goal; 4) international interaction is fundamentally conflictual; 5) man cannot transcend the world of conflict

realm is a ‘Hobbesian’ anarchical sphere with no sovereign power, or as Schuman put it some time ago: “the law of the jungle still prevails” (1941, p. 9; see also Spykman, 1942). The precise effects of anarchy and its role in international politics have been amongst the most widely discussed issues in realist circles, but the basic notion of anarchy as a structural condition is shared by all.<sup>9</sup> Second, and closely related to this, is that realism holds that interests are related to competition for control over scarce goods. Contrary to what is often assumed, this struggle is not *necessarily* limited to states; it takes place between ‘conflict groups’, including e.g. ethnic groups, socio-economic classes, states or alliances (Gilpin, 1996). This view draws in part on Carl Schmitt’s well-known friend/enemy distinction: “every religious, moral, economic, ethical, or other antithesis transforms into a political one if it is sufficiently strong to group human beings effectively according to friend and enemy” (1976, p. 37; see also Pichler, 1998). Realists do not deny that there can be shared interests and equilibria of sorts, but they do believe that politics is often tragic in that efforts to increase security and limit suffering under conditions of anarchy oftentimes invite more insecurity and suffering (see Lebow, 2003; Mearsheimer, 2001; Herz, 1951; 1950).<sup>10</sup> A third core tenet of realism is that, in light of its inherently antagonistic nature, politics must primarily be viewed through the lens of ‘interest defined in terms of power’ (Morgenthau, 1985; see also Schmidt, 2005). This certainly does not mean that ideas, identities and ethics are entirely

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through reason; 6) morality is the product of power; and 7) necessity and reason of state prevail when they conflict with morality and ethics.

<sup>9</sup> It is important to note that “to conceive of international politics as a Hobbesian state of nature means not that warfare is constant, but only that it is always a possibility and that actors understand this” (Jervis, 1998, p. 986).

<sup>10</sup> In this vein Kennan (1989) described the “incorrigible tragedy and vanity and futility of all human endeavour” (p. 47) and the “built-in tragic nature of the individual human predicament which men ha[ve] always had to face” (p. 225; see also Koskeniemi, 2002, pp. 448-449).

unimportant, but realists believe that in the world as it is the final arbiter of all things political is power (Gilpin, 1984; 1981). These essential terms, *power* and *interests*, have resultantly become almost inherently associated with the realist paradigm, but as we will argue below what is mostly important is what *kind* of power and interests are implied by realism's conceptual framework.

Realism's founding principles have been interpreted and operationalised in many different ways. The most notable distinction is between classical realism and neorealism (Waltz, 1979), though recently there has also been work that has been described as 'neoclassical realism', fusing neorealism's structural analysis with a focus on actor-specific variables such as elites' beliefs (Rose, 1998; Zakaria, 1998). This points to the main difference between classical realism and neorealism: the latter takes as its dependent variable international political outcomes, as opposed to the classics' interest in foreign policy (with neoclassical realism somewhat in the middle). Neorealism is therefore mostly a structural theory of change rather than an avenue toward understanding actors' foreign policy.<sup>11</sup> Neorealism furthermore pays no attention to *Innenpolitik* as it takes an undifferentiated view of the units of international politics (see Lobell et. al., 2009, p. 20).<sup>12</sup> As a result it has strongly been criticised by constructivists

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<sup>11</sup> Waltz makes this point clearly in a short piece entitled *International Politics is not Foreign Policy* (1996).

<sup>12</sup> An important stream within the (neo)realist literature emphasises the overriding importance of *survival* in an anarchic world. Mearsheimer's work (2001) is perhaps the best example of this argument (see also Labs, 1997), though it takes a strongly 'offensive' approach in its assumption that anarchy will lead great powers to adopt aggressive foreign policies to accumulate power (for an overview see Snyder, 2002). In addition, the theory specifies that two strategies can be used in the face of the rising power of an adversary: balancing or passing the buck – 'bandwagoning' is argued to be a rare occurrence (ibid., pp. 161-163). Mearsheimer's approach can be considered as a reply to 'defensive' realism (e.g. Posen, 2006; Van Evera, 1999; Walt, 1991; Waltz, 2001; 1979; Jervis, 1986), which argues that the development of defensive – rather than offensive – capabilities is a more likely outcome of anarchy. Mearsheimer diagnoses the differences between the approaches succinctly: "For defensive realists, the international

for assuming that all actors have the same preferences (Wendt, 1999). Especially since the end of the Cold War realists seem to have taken to heart some of the constructivist criticisms, seeking to move beyond neorealism's "ultra-parsimonious, structural formulation" which some argue now appears "more as a theoretical straightjacket than a progressive research paradigm" (Schweller & Priess, 1997, p. 9).<sup>13</sup> As a result of this reorientation it can be said that classical realism is being 'resurrected' (Sylvest, 2008, p. 443; see also Kirshner, 2010; Scheuerman, 2009; 2008; Osborn, 2009; Cozette, 2008; Williams, 2005; 2004). In this section we will draw on this emergent trend (which overlaps to some degree with the rise of neoclassical realism; some distinctions are highlighted below) as we discuss three important aspects of realist theory in order to delineate how realism provides a theory of IR that is, at heart, concerned with *material* variables.<sup>14</sup> These three points are: human nature, the concept of power and its relationship with ideas, and the effects of anarchy on IR.

A good starting point to come to an understanding of realism's materialist explanatory schema is classical realism's grounding in individual psychology. Hans Morgenthau considered Freudian (natural) drives for self-preservation (*Erhaltungstrieb*) and self-assertion (*Bewährungstrieb*) to be at the basis of political action. Whereas the will to live can be satiated within reasonable limits, the drive for self-assertion knows fewer boundaries; it is this limitless desire for *Herrschaft* which "constitutes the structure provides states with little incentive to seek additional increments of power; instead it pushes them to maintain the existing balance of power. Preserving power, rather than increasing it, is the main goal of states. Offensive realists, on the other hand, believe that status quo powers are rarely found in world politics, because the international system creates powerful incentives for states to look for opportunities to gain power at the expense of rivals and to take advantage of those situations when the benefits outweigh the costs. A state's ultimate goal is to be the hegemon in the system" (2001, p. 21).

<sup>13</sup> A strong earlier critique was formulated by Richard Ashley (1984).

<sup>14</sup> Another reason for our focus on classical realism can be found in its commensurability with a constructivist view, which will facilitate our synthesis of the perspectives (see below and Barkin, 2003).



ubiquity of evil in human action” (Morgenthau, 1947, p. 46). However, a dualistic tension lies at the heart of classical realism: politics is a sphere of struggle due to the selfish proclivities of man, but he/she also possesses moral purpose. Reinhold Niebuhr put it as follows: “politics will, to the end of history, be an area where conscience and power meet, where the ethical and coercive factors of human life will interpenetrate and work out their tentative and uneasy compromises” (2005, p. 4). It is therefore not true that classical realism holds that international politics is *entirely determined* by the immutable, ‘evil’ sociobiological characteristics of humans; ‘human nature’ could after all also be seen as a factor that infuses politics with a degree of ‘moral purpose’ (Williams, 2004; Murray, 1996; Lovin, 1995). Nonetheless, the self-regarding aspects of human nature are given *primary emphasis* by realists as they are viewed as delimiting the degree of social progress that is realistically achievable (Donnelly, 2000, p. 10; Lebow, 2007). In this regard the ‘brute materialism’ of human nature serves as a driver for action and poses an important barrier to the extent to which ideas can progressively alter the nature of social/political interaction.<sup>15</sup> This marks an important difference between realists and idealists: notwithstanding identity and convictions, for realists an exclusivist or individualistic form of self-interest will *always* play a role in politics and cannot be overcome through human effort. Behind this lies the conviction that self-interest is ingrained in human nature; it is part of the biological *material* that makes us what we are.

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<sup>15</sup> With regards to this limitation, E.H. Carr admits that “the impossibility of being a consistent and thorough-going realist is one of the most certain and most curious lessons of political science” (1995, p. 84). With this he means that a ‘pure’ realism would lead to nihilism of sorts through its scepticism regarding purposive action, whereas “[the postulate] that human affairs can be directed and modified by human action and human thought is ... so fundamental that its rejection seems scarcely compatible with existence as a human being” (ibid., p. 87).

If this points to a mode of explanation that is encapsulated by a materialist outlook, as indeed we argue, we can say that the material dimension of IR is further emphasised in the realist conceptualisation of the relationship between ideas and power. In order to understand how this works we must first explain the concept of power. As we will see, idealists are primarily interested in a form of power that consists of persuading others through socialisation and dialogical processes. Even small states or actors could have a significant degree of influence in this manner, irrespective of the question of whether they possess the means to physically compel others. For realists, in contrast, even though the existence of different kinds of power is acknowledged, it ultimately has a material basis, consisting primarily of technical, economic and military capabilities (for a discussion see Mearsheimer, 2001, Ch. 3-4; Gilpin, 1981, pp. 13-14; see also Deutsch, 1968, Ch. 3). According to Barnett and Duvall, therefore, the realist conception of power relates to “the ability of states to use *material resources* to get others to do what they otherwise would not” (2005, p. 40, emphasis added).<sup>16</sup> Beliefs, then, are rooted in material capabilities, and for realists it is *the force behind an idea* that is of importance rather than the contents of the idea itself (Schweller & Wohlforth, 2000). Here the influence of historical materialism on the realist approach is apparent, as illustrated by the following citation:

*The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental*

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<sup>16</sup> For the debate on persuading vs. bargaining see also Müller (2004).

*production are subject to it. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships, the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas.* (Marx & Engels, 1846, Part I, BII.2, emphasis added)<sup>17</sup>

This view was further developed by Antonio Gramsci (1988), who investigated the relationship between material dominance and normative consent or ideational hegemony.<sup>18</sup> Realists have been able to draw on this approach in order to bolster their view of the relationship between material power and ideas (Costalli, 2009). It must be added that this also opens the door to a more comprehensive analysis than one that focuses exclusively on material variables, given that ideas are not taken out of the equation entirely (as in neorealism). Reference to Machiavelli's centaur illustrates this point, as it uses both coercion and consensus to achieve its goals (see Hyde-Price, 2008). But without at least the option of coercion, consensus is highly suspect for realists, who largely follow the adage that covenants without the sword, as argued by Thomas Hobbes, are but words; they are of no strength to secure a man at all (1996, §17:1). The bottom line is that ideas are a product of material capabilities, and without such capabilities it is doubtful that an actor will be able to successfully influence the behaviour of others. The influence of ideas will therefore always have to be explained in terms of an overarching framework of power. In the words of Mark Blyth: "Ideas in such treatments are ultimately secondary to the mode of analysis in which they are employed. Their definition, operationalization, and explanatory power are simply

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<sup>17</sup> Possibly drawing on these remarks, Carr discussed how beliefs were often "weapons framed for the furtherance of interest" (1995, p. 65).

<sup>18</sup> For the debate on hegemony see Destradi (2010; 2008); Hurrell (2004); Pedersen (2002); Ikenberry and Kupchan (1990a; 1990b).

derivative of the wider theory in which they are embedded” (cited in Lieberman, 2002, p. 699). As we will argue below, we believe that this employment of ideas could (and should) be made more sophisticated by incorporating insights from other schools of thought.

The above reference to Hobbes alludes to the importance of bringing anarchy (or the lack of international sovereign power) into our discussion. Its effects are concisely explicated by John Herz’s security dilemma (1951; 1950), in which uncertainty of what others’ intentions are drives rational actors to prepare for conflict.<sup>19</sup> Pacts and alliances can be broken, and therefore it would be foolish to rest on one’s laurels when it comes to national defence. Norms could of course be useful in overcoming the dilemma, but since it is rather difficult to know whether others can be trusted or not the option to enforce order should always be kept open (Williams, 2005). This is one of the most important sites of dissent between idealism and realism: for the former anarchy has no *independent* effects on the behaviour of actors, whereas the latter often uses the rationalist language of economics and the logic of game theory to delineate how anarchy influences behaviour in ways that are unrelated to beliefs.

The above indicates that realism does not suggest that non-material variables are entirely insignificant, but because of the logic imposed by anarchy it regards material force as the *ultima ratio* of international politics. Despite the acknowledgement of moral impulses, therefore, the realist believes that “necessity and reason of state trump

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<sup>19</sup> This is essentially a game theoretical problem, given that it asks how under conditions of scarcity and with given preferences but limited knowledge rational actors can maximise their gains (i.e. ensure survival). In this case the answer is analogous to the prisoner’s dilemma, where the amalgamation of individually rational decisions leads to a collectively suboptimal outcome (Mearsheimer, 2001). For example, realists have pointed out that it makes rational sense for Iran to desire a nuclear weapon, given the uncertainties of its neighbourhood and the security offered by a nuclear deterrent, and some expect nuclear balancing to have a stabilising effect (Waltz, 2012).

morality and ethics when these values conflict” (Schweller, 1997, p. 927). This certainly does not mean that actors are advised to always follow an aggressive or hawkish foreign policy<sup>20</sup>, but what is certain is that the potential of physical force should always be given due consideration. This also underscores the supremacy of instrumental rationality within the realist paradigm. Realists focus on the use of material incentives (sticks and carrots) and trade-offs in actors’ strategies to realise objectives; the idea that deeper perceptions and beliefs may be altered is considered a product of power rather than a way to attenuate its application.

In sum, when we speak of materialist self-interest in a realist fashion, reference is made primarily to material (economic and security-related) scarce goods, which are typically pursued *relative to* others rather than *in concert with* them. And as a result of the fixed attributes of anarchy and human nature, driving international politics towards ‘tragedy’, realists believe that hubris and the need to satisfy short-term objectives will often be at the expense of long-term equilibria (Frost, 2003; Lebow, 2003; Spirtas, 1996). The ultimate tragedy consists of the fact that there is fundamentally no rational way to avoid these problems given the ‘timeless’ logic that is impelled by key material variables. We can thus agree with Alexander Wendt that “the *uniquely realist* hypothesis about national interests is that they have a *material rather than social basis* ...” (1999, p. 114, emphasis added).

### **Realism and the European Union**

In what way does the realist paradigm apply to the European Union? We must stress that realism, by virtue of its focus on ‘conflict groups’, is not inherently wedded to a

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<sup>20</sup> Many realists opposed e.g. the invasion of Iraq (Mearsheimer, 2005), and according to a study conducted in the 1970s Hans Morgenthau was the second most influential critic in the academic discussion on Vietnam after Noam Chomsky (himself also a realist of sorts; see Osborn, 2009; See, 2001; Kadushin, 1974).

‘statist’ view of IR. This is illustrated by the fact that realists like Morgenthau and Niebuhr thought extensively about the means to overcome the dangers and injustices of the Westphalian system. Morgenthau explicitly supported the idea of functional linkage of interests, as expounded in David Mitrany’s theory of functionalism (1946). According to William Scheuerman, both Morgenthau and Mitrany were alerted “to the static contours of traditional legal and constitutional devices” that characterise “so-called ‘top-down’ models of constitutional reform” (2009, p. 129). In this view, grand legal and constitutional schemes to achieve some form of federalism are bound to fail since they are unable to deal with the dynamism of international social and economic activity.

Notwithstanding the specific shortcomings of functionalism as a theory<sup>21</sup>, the compatibility of a realist and a functionalist outlook indicates that realism might be more flexible than typically assumed. But contrary to liberal, institutionalist or constructivist accounts of IR, consistent application of realism’s assumptions does not give rise to the expectation that linkage of interests can *fundamentally* undermine the conflictual nature of international politics. As Morgenthau wrote: “when the national state will have been replaced by another mode of organization, *foreign policy must then protect the interest ... of that new organization*” (1952, p. 972, emphasis added). This is clearly reminiscent of Martin Wight’s remark that far-going cooperation between states might lead to the substitution of nation states for larger actors, but that this would not

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<sup>21</sup> Functionalism has been an influential theory of European integration, and it appears to have provided the theoretical framework for the initial steps of European cooperation, including EURATOM and the ECSC. However, subsequent authors, particularly neo-functionalists like Haas (1958) and Lindberg (1963), have expressed a number of fundamental criticisms on functionalism. Especially functionalism’s separation of high and low politics appears to be problematic, as well as the theory’s ambiguity regarding the specific effects and outcomes of integration and spillover. Moreover, the functionalist expectation that the development of international structures will erode and diminish the role of the state, and in this way make world peace a more realistic possibility, has thus far proven to be incorrect.

solve the fundamental problems of international affairs (1978).<sup>22</sup> Put differently; shared interests can drive a group of nations into a form of collusion that will serve their interests vis-à-vis ‘others’ (Schweller & Priess, 1997), but realists are adamant that “no nation will forego its freedom of action if it has no reason to expect proportionate benefits in compensation for that loss” (Morgenthau, 1952, p. 973). The apparent paradox here is that the historically contingent phenomenon of *national* interest can be overcome only through the promotion of the interests of a number of states in concert. Morgenthau cites Thucydides to this effect: “Identity of interest is the surest bond whether between states or individuals” (ibid., p. 972). Costalli comes to the same conclusion: “the eventual construction of a new regional identity does not change the system: it can only drive the risks of conflict towards another ‘them’ situated at the borders of the new region” (2009, p. 331). Thus, while realists admit that nation states may engage in cooperative practices (when they have evident shared interests), they underscore that this does not fundamentally undermine the wider struggle for relative power.

An example of how this view could be applied to the EU can be found in Raymond Aron’s analysis of the earlier forms of European integration. He understood this process as an illustration of what he called ‘peace by satisfaction or consent’ (1981, p. 161). This is a situation where, following a ‘trial by force’, a group of nations is unwilling or unable to challenge their relative distribution of power. Peace, in this sense, is based on rational calculations regarding a balance of power and intentions

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<sup>22</sup> Interestingly, this is precisely what allows us to treat the EU as an ‘actor’ from a realist perspective, given that “[w]hat is essential to the logic of realist theory, is not the particular scope of the actors, but the ability to draw a sharp distinction between anarchy among actors and hierarchy within them” (Legro & Moravcsik, 1999, p. 13). Thus, if we accept that the Union is “beginning to assume statelike qualities”, bringing “into question the continued existence of an anarchic international system among its members” (Buzan, 1993, p. 349), it can legitimately be considered as an actor under the assumptions of realism.

between more-or-less equally powerful status quo-oriented actors.<sup>23</sup> However, it must be said that “if, in certain areas, at certain periods in time, we divine the premises of a peace by satisfaction, the relations of power, over a larger area and on a higher level, do not permit us to state that the principle of peace has been satisfaction” (ibid., p. 162). In other words; ‘peace by satisfaction’ between European nations does not eliminate anarchy on a higher level.<sup>24</sup> Europe is therefore not distinct from what Aron calls ‘the world of egoism’, which is why he insists that the EU will “not modify the international order” (ibid., p. 755). In this view the EU cannot be expected to transcend considerations of relative power and zero-sum rationalities, as some constructivists and liberals have predicted.

This leaves one final question open: what interests does the European Union pursue? Realists who have investigated this question have been relatively straightforward about what is considered to be the Union’s primary purpose: to defend the economic interests of its member states. As Costalli writes:

*In the economic realm, the EU is a real superpower, with an enormous latent power represented by the advanced economies of its member states and its huge internal market, as well as by the capacity to decide and implement effective*

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<sup>23</sup> Some realists accordingly believe that the decline of European power – and the presence of a Soviet threat (Rosato, 2011) – lies at the basis of European integration (Rynning, 2011). As Michael Loriaux writes: “the commitment to European Union is an affair of realist prudence born of scepticism” (1999, p. 378). In this spirit there has been (neorealist) work on the role of balancing versus the United States (Posen, 2006; Lieber & Alexander, 2005) and the containment of German power (Mearsheimer, 2001).

<sup>24</sup> One rather controversial version of this argument is Robert Cooper’s insistence that “among ourselves, we keep the law but when we are operating in the jungle, we must also use the laws of the jungle” (2002, p. 3). The problem here is that Cooper turns realism’s analytical framework into a prescriptive schema (Cooper, 2003), something which many realists have explicitly avoided.



*policies, especially concerning trade, thanks to a full range of policy instruments and a high degree of autonomy.* (2009, pp. 335-336)

In this light one analyst has described the EU as principally “an instrument for the collective economic interests of [the member] states” (Hyde-Price, 2008, p. 31; see also Grieco, 1997; 1995). Its function is to compete on behalf of its members vis-à-vis external actors in the international economy, or as Zimmermann has argued, the EU is motivated by the “interest to maximize EU wealth relative to other powers” (2007, p. 813, see also e.g. Farrell, 2005). This view is deeply rooted in the realist tradition:

*[I]n a highly integrated global economy, states continue to use their power and to implement policies to change economic forces favourable to their own national interests and the interests of their citizenry. These national economic interests include receipt of a favourable share of the gains from international economic activities and preservation of national autonomy.* (Gilpin, 2001, p. 21)

It follows that, as María García writes, in a realist perspective “the EU seeks to maximise benefits for its economic actors: e.g. milieu-shaping rule adoption, gaining allies for multilateral talks, entering a market before competitors, and not just short-term increases in trade” (2013, p. 524). Very clearly this view contradicts an idea-centred conceptualisation of the EU, as it challenges the notion that Europe’s ideational characteristics can drive a ‘different’ kind of foreign policy motivated by a ‘logic of appropriateness’ (ibid., see also below and García, 2012). For realists it is therefore doubtful that the EU could follow a ‘post-modern’ route, which, as we will see below, has been suggested by scholars focusing on ideational variables.

In studies on the EU's Mediterranean relations, the realist outlook has underpinned what Attinà (2003) refers to as the hegemony/domination perspective. For analysts within this approach, the EU's goals are market dependence and the acquirement of a better position in the world economic system, with a focus on "protecting overseas capital investment, building alternative energy supplies, limiting immigration and also developing military preparedness for action to face potential security threats to the European soil and interests" (ibid., p. 6). Thus, to put it differently, the realist approach argues that the EU is a self-interested actor focused on material gains – 'a realist actor in normative clothes' (Seeberg, 2009). One example can be found in Roberts' argument that in the Algerian civil war the EU chose to follow economic interests without taking heed of the significant human rights cost (Roberts, 2002; see also Zoubir, & Bouandel, 1998). In a more general sense Costalli has made the same point: "[the EU] uses the asymmetry inherent in the relationships with the Mediterranean partners above all to preserve and possibly increase [its] power and wealth" (2009, p. 336). In this vein one author speaks of the possibility of a "new stage of neo-colonial exploitation characterized by unilateral exploitation" (Kienle, 1998, p. 10). Another example is that of Kébabdjian (1995), who identified a nonreciprocal relationship of trade concessions operating strictly in Europe's favour (see also El-Emam, 1999; Waloulou, 1997; Parfitt, 1997; Kébabdjian et. al., 1994).

In sum; the materialist focus of the realist perspective gives rise to a conceptualisation of EFP towards the MENA in which particularly the economic interests of the Union are viewed as *the* prevalent independent variable. Ideas are not necessarily discounted altogether in this perspective, but they are assigned a secondary status for explaining EU foreign policy. In advance of our in-depth discussion further in this chapter, it can be noted that this is a somewhat reductionist perspective on EFP that

leaves unexplained some of the more specific ways in which the EU pursues material interests. Furthermore, it appears to underplay the extent to which the EU has adopted a wide range of policies that are relatively distant to material gains.

### ***Ideas and Foreign Policy: Intersubjectivity and Norms***

#### **Theoretical Foundations**

We must now investigate more closely how other approaches to IR have explained EFP. Since it is not our intention in this thesis to provide a full account of how ideas are conceptualised across the social sciences, or even IR, we fully acknowledge that the discussion in the present section focuses only on a relatively limited selection of theories from the much broader collection of political/social science approaches to ideas. In particular, we will discuss constructivism, which has most clearly and most explicitly undertaken to put the study of ideas back on the agenda of political scientists (Béland & Cox, 2011, p. 5; Lapid & Kratochwil, 1997). In light of the end of the Cold War and the collapse of Communism, the global convergence towards a neoliberal politico-economic framework in the 1990s, and a growing dissatisfaction over the perceived static nature of material approaches and their inability to have foreseen the aforementioned radical changes, ideas gained much ground in studies on IR since the early 1990s (Lieberman, 2002). It is this post-Cold War ideational literature from self-identified IR scholars that we will discuss below.

A good starting point is Alexander Wendt's call in 1992 on liberals and constructivists (which he called 'communitarian liberals') to join forces, focusing particularly on the aspect of liberal theory which Andrew Moravcsik would later refer to

as the “social purposes underlying state preferences” (1997, p. 516).<sup>25</sup> Wendt’s argument was that interests and state behaviour are the product of their socially constituted environment, which is why he famously asserted that ‘anarchy is what states make of it’ (1992). This underlines the core ontological distinction that is made in constructivist thought between objective (natural or material) ‘brute facts’ and ‘social facts’, the latter consisting of socially established conventions (Searle, 1995).<sup>26</sup> The contention is that the social kind of facts can provide the best explanation for the way in which political actors behave in the international domain. Constructivism thus poses an intersubjective theory in which actor-specific understandings are endogenous to interaction, in explicit contradistinction to rationalist-behavioural theories that take them as given (Wendt, 1992, p. 394). That is to say: whereas a pure ‘rationalism’ operates on the assumption of instrumental rationality that is generalised for all actors<sup>27</sup>,

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<sup>25</sup> Moravcsik provides a useful overview of liberalism, stating that “the relationship between states and the surrounding domestic and transnational society in which they are embedded critically shapes state behavior by influencing the social purposes underlying state preferences” (1997, p. 516). What underpins this view is a set of three core assumptions: 1) the fundamental actors in international affairs are rational, risk-averse individuals and private groups engaging in collective action to promote differentiated interests; 2) state interests are shaped according to the preferences of influential subsets of domestic society; 3) state behaviour is determined by the configuration of interdependent state preferences. In this vein, Moravcsik asserts that the aim of IR theory is to “generalize about the social conditions under which the behavior of self-interested actors converges toward cooperation or conflict” (ibid., p. 517). We may note that this ambition is very similar to the aims of Waltz’ neorealist project (1979), but it has in common with constructivism its emphasis on the dynamic between internal and external forces in the formation of preferences.

<sup>26</sup> In spite of this distinction, it can be said that constructivism has remained ontologically ‘agnostic’ in that it does not necessarily exclude any particular variables from its analysis (Hopf, 1998, p. 194). As we will see, this is a crucial aspect for examining the paradigm’s relationship with a realist outlook (see also Price & Reus-Smit, 1998).

<sup>27</sup> In this approach, “given preferences, probabilities, and choice points, it is possible to derive a complete set of strategies, choices that [actors] will make at every node in the game, and equilibrium outcomes, of which there may be many” (Katzenstein et. al., 1998, p. 679).

constructivism posits that rationality (regarded in terms of ‘appropriateness’ [Finnemore, 1996]) is actor and context specific. For this reason we need to know what an actor *is* in order to understand what it *does*. Instrumentalism still exists – for this reason a hard distinction between rationalism and constructivism is somewhat misleading; e.g. Adler (1997) described constructivism as a ‘middle way’ approach between rationalism and relativism – but it operates only in the context of ‘common knowledge’. The latter consists of identity-driven preferences and intersubjectively shared cognitions in the form of norms, epistemic knowledge and culture (Katzenstein et. al., 1998, pp. 679-680).

This clarifies how constructivists are inspired by liberalism’s earlier account of the dynamics of interest formation (returning in some respects to some of the interbellum liberal ideas<sup>28</sup>), but also that they are critical of what they would regard as the confusion of social and brute facts in assumptions pertaining to the effects of anarchy and rationalist benefit optimisation (as practiced by e.g. neoliberals and neoliberal institutionalists<sup>29</sup>). On the basis of this ontology we can identify three distinct

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<sup>28</sup> See Long and Wilson (1995). It can be said that these ideas returned to the forefront around the time of the end of the Cold War in the form of the democratic peace thesis (Doyle, 1986; Russett, 1993). Jack Levy wrote in 1989 that this thesis was the closest thing to an empirical law in political science (p. 88), a claim supported by Francis Fukuyama, who maintained that no liberal democracy has ever fought against another of its kind (1992).

<sup>29</sup> Liberalism represents a rationalist approach towards international interaction, in which the theory’s key defining characteristic resides in its understanding of how state preferences are constituted. This is echoed in the (neoliberal) intuitionist account of IR, which focuses especially on the ‘complex interdependence’ that is believed to constrain state behaviour (Keohane & Nye, 1972). Though institutionalists differ with liberals on the exact degree of overlap between different states’ interests – institutionalism, after all, “*takes the existence of mutual interests as given* and examines the conditions under which they will lead to cooperation” (Keohane, 1984, p. 6, emphasis added) – they share a belief that the creation of norms, regimes and institutions can generate situations where it is rational for actors to collectively pursue mutually advantageous arrangements (Axelrod & Keohane, 1985). The emphasis lies with absolute rather than relative gains: it does not matter much whether profits are equitably shared, what is more important

elements that are characteristic of the constructivist approach (Copeland, 2006, p. 3). First, constructivists hold that ideational structures shape and constrain behaviour: intersubjectively shared ideas, norms, and values (i.e. social facts) are regarded as the primary drivers of foreign policy. As Hopf argues (1998, p. 173): “Meaningful behavior, or action, is possible only within an intersubjective social context. Actors develop their relations with, and understandings of, others through the media of norms and practices. In the absence of norms, exercises of power, or actions, would be devoid of meaning” (see also Weldes, 1996). Second, constructivist theory focuses on ‘socialisation’, assuming that the ideational structure of interaction between ‘agents’ has a continuous constitutive effect on their self-understanding and thus on their evolving definitions of self-interest (Checkel & Katzenstein, 2009; Zürn & Checkel, 2005; Checkel, 1999; Katzenstein, 1996). Contrary to neorealist and neoliberal accounts of IR, which take an essentially static view on identity and interests, constructivists thus focus on processes of change and self-perception that take place on “a social level where the agent’s identity is related to groups” (Guzzini, 2000, p. 166; see also Neumann, 2002). This leads us to the third and final point, which is that structures and actors are seen as co-deterministic and mutually constitutive. For constructivists it is not the case that there is a ‘one way street’ where structure shapes identity, as for example in Marxist accounts of interest formation, but instead there is a deeply symbiotic relationship between the two: “structures only exist through the reciprocal interaction of actors” (Copeland, 2006, p. 3).

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is the question of how corrosive activities like free-riding and the temptation to cheat in order to achieve short-term gains can be dealt with.

As with any theoretical school, there are various interpretations of these core assumptions.<sup>30</sup> Yet at the basis of all constructivist thought lies the notion of ‘identity’. To cite one author: “the identity of a state implies its preferences and consequent actions” (Hopf, 1998, p. 175). Closely related, as mentioned above, are the concepts of ‘norms’, ‘epistemic knowledge’ and ‘culture’. But how can these terms be defined? To start with identity, a range of different options is available (for an overview see Fearon, 1999). Wendt, for example, calls identities “relatively stable, role-specific understandings and expectations about self” (1992, p. 397; for an intra-constructivist critique see Zehfuss, 2006).<sup>31</sup> Another definition is suggested by Herrigel, who speaks of collective identity in terms of “the desire for group distinction, dignity, and place within historically specific discourses (or frames of understanding) about the character, structure, and boundaries of the polity and the economy” (1993, p. 371). A common denominator amongst the various definitions on offer is an emphasis on *recognition* and *distinction*; identity marks the recognisable difference between one agent and another. It thus serves to make sense of one’s conduct and to prescribe appropriate courses of action under given circumstances. This is where norms and epistemic knowledge come to the fore, as they “typically describe collective expectations with ‘regulative’ effects on the proper behavior of actors with a given identity” and help to give meaning to the

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<sup>30</sup> Accordingly a variety of research programmes has been pursued, including e.g. Foucauldian power analyses (now a burgeoning field, see for discussions e.g. Shani & Chandler, 2010; Kiersey & Stokes, 2010; Dillon & Neal, 2008 – an application to the EU can be found in Merlingen & Ostrauskaite, 2006), Habermasian communicative action theory (Checkel, 2001), and work on ‘security communities’ (Adler & Barnett, 1998).

<sup>31</sup> The idea of a ‘role’ in international affairs is therefore closely related to identity, as evident in Hill’s definition of the term as a “distinctive, high-profile and coherent identity” (1993, p. 307). In this vein it can be said that both ‘identity’ and ‘role’ refer to a relatively consistent (though not fixed), distinguishable set of actions in resonance with an actor’s self-understanding, or a stable pattern of behaviour, in interactions with others.

material world (Katzenstein et. al., 1998, pp. 679-680). Norms can also work the other way around, specifying ‘appropriate’ rules to which actors must adhere in order for a specific identity to be recognised (March & Olsen, 1998). Norms and identity are thus closely intertwined, and the specifics of one will usually tell us much about the nature of the other (Risse & Sikkink, 1999). Finally, culture is a broader concept that “refers to both evaluative standards (such as norms and values) and cognitive standards (such as rules and models) that define the social actors that exist in a system, how they operate, and how they relate to one another” (Katzenstein et. al., 1998, p. 670). In this sense culture operates as a master signifier of sorts, within which norms, epistemic knowledge and identity are located as meaning-givers for action amongst agents (Copeland, 2006; Tannenwald, 2005; Adler, 2002; Risse & Sikkink, 1999; Searle, 1995).

In sum, if we wish to understand why actors do what they do from a constructivist perspective, we must first understand *who* they are. What kind of ideas lie at the basis of their actions? Or to put it differently: what are the culturally specific norms and epistemic assumptions through which they perceive both themselves and their external environment? These factors constitute the ‘schemas’ that are believed by constructivists to enable and give meaning to interest formation and resultantly to action.<sup>32</sup> Instrumental rationality is not entirely relinquished, but the assumption that it means the same thing to all actors in all circumstances is questioned, thus subsuming instrumentalism within a broader ideational frame of understanding. Evidently there is

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<sup>32</sup> See Wendt, 1999, p. 124 & p. 230. Claudia Strauss describes such schemas as “learned, internalised patterns of thought-feeling that mediate both the interpretation of on-going experience and the reconstruction of memories” (1992, p. 3). Ultimately this is the psychological/philosophical basis of constructivist thought, and it constitutes the core prism through which we must explain the formulation of an actor’s interests and resultantly its behaviour towards others. As we have said, for the purposes of IR it can be broken down into identity, norms, epistemic knowledge, and culture, which together fulfil the abovementioned meaning-giving functions.



little room for *independent* material forces here, though constructivists have differed on this question. Some believe it is ideas ‘all the way down’, but more moderate authors have been somewhat open to allowing for a slight degree of ‘rump materialism’ to account for certain kinds of actions (e.g. Wendt, 1999; Ruggie, 1998).<sup>33</sup> Yet if we accept the suggestion of ‘ontological agnosticism’ (Hopf, 1998) it seems that there is some room for cooperation with different schools of thought. We will return to this question after our discussion of the application of constructivism/idealism to the EU.

### **Constructivism applied to the European Union**

How can the constructivist perspective and its theorisation of the constitutive function of identity, norms, epistemic knowledge and culture to shape the preferences and behaviour of actors be applied to the European Union? Just as there are many different kinds of constructivism, this question could be answered in a myriad of different ways. For this reason we do not aspire to be exhaustive, but we will rather explain the theoretical links between constructivism’s core explanatory framework and a particular conceptualisation of the EU that has provided one of the most influential explanations of Europe’s external engagements: the normative power approach. The idea that the EU is a normative foreign policy actor has gained widespread currency in the literature, and it has often been posited in contradistinction to self-interested zero-sum behaviour. This makes it a useful perspective for our purposes, and though not all who have used the term have been self-identified constructivists we will utilise constructivism to draw out some of the underlying logics and assumptions.

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<sup>33</sup> Wendt outlines three ways in which material factors may affect IR: 1) through the “distribution of actors’ material capabilities”; 2) through the technological composition of material capabilities; and 3) through “geography and natural resources” (1999, p. 110). And for Ruggie, “the building blocks of international reality are ideational as well as material” (1998, p. 33).

Conceptual and historical precedent to the ‘normative power’ hypothesis can be found in the notion of ‘civilian power’. One of the earliest and most notable efforts can be ascribed to François Duchêne, who has written that: “The EC will only make the most of its opportunities if it remains true to its inner characteristics. They are primarily: civilian ends and means and a built-in sense of collective action, which in turn express, however imperfectly, social values of equality, justice and tolerance” (1972, p. 20). Thus, for Duchêne shared social values constitute the ‘inner characteristics’ of European cooperation, and he was positive about the central role that this might grant the collective of member states in the future (see e.g. 1973, p. 19; a modern version of this argument is Leonard, 2005).<sup>34</sup>

‘Civilian power’ refers primarily to the means with which the EU could influence international affairs – i.e.: how can Europe make its voice heard in IR? The emphasis is explicitly placed on what makes Europe ‘different’ from other actors. Hanns Maull defined the means related to such ‘political civilisation’ as follows: 1) acceptance of the need to cooperate with others in the pursuit of international objectives; 2) focus on non-military and primarily economic means to secure goals; and 3) willingness to develop supranational structures to address international issues (1990, pp. 92-93).<sup>35</sup> Given the Union’s historical trajectory as a vehicle for collective action based on shared social values and an eschewal of compulsion through force, the argument runs, Europe should not adopt means or goals that are contradictory to these

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<sup>34</sup> More recently, the civilian (non-military) nature of the EU has been called into question in view of emerging military capabilities (Treacher, 2004), and others have critically assessed the separation of military and civilian means in international affairs (Whitman, 2006).

<sup>35</sup> In a similar vein some authors have applied Joseph Nye’s concept of ‘soft power’ (2004) as an alternative to civilian power to describe the EU’s modality of interaction with external actors (Hill, 1990). For some the concept is deeply intertwined with civilian power: “civilian powers rely on soft power, on persuasion and attraction, not on coercion or carrots and sticks” (Smith, 2005, p. 68).

values. What is more, as some authors have speculated, its ideational basis could lead the EU to “seek to reproduce itself by encouraging regional integration around the world” and to “act collectively as a ‘civilian power’ and export [a] liberal vision of peace through democracy, and democratization through trade” (Nicolaidis & Howse, 2002, p. 768).<sup>36</sup> Very clearly we can recognise in this formulation the fundamentally constructivist assumption of an integral chain of *ideas-interests-behaviour* (Wendt, 1999; Hopf, 1998), driven by a shared vision of the EU as constituted by a set of common (liberal) values. In this light, one author speaks of the European Union’s “postnationalist, liberal collective identity” as the basis for e.g. enlargement and foreign engagement (Schimmelfennig, 2001, p. 184; see also Sedelmeier, 2000; Fierke & Wiener, 1999; Luif, 1997).

The concept of civilian power was given new life through Ian Manners’ notion of ‘normative power Europe’ (NPE) (2008; 2006a; 2002; see also e.g. Wood, 2009; Sjursen, 2006; Diez, 2005).<sup>37</sup> Manners argued that the EU has the potential to change the ‘normality’ of international relations: “it changes the norms, standards and prescriptions of world politics away from the bounded expectations of state-centricity” (Manners, 2008, p. 45). In a narrow interpretation of this view the European Union does not even need to have an active foreign policy in order to be normative, given that its existence as an example of how to transcend Westphalian strife in itself already fulfils a norm-changing function. In the present thesis we are more interested in what Europe *does*, and in this regard the normative argument points us towards the links between

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<sup>36</sup> Nicolaidis and Howse did contend, however, that such a representation of Europe relied more upon a discursive ‘utopia’ than on what it truly is. See also Bicchi (2006) for ‘civilising power’, defined by her in terms of Eurocentric institutional isomorphism. Finally, we must take note of Hettne and Söderbaum’s useful distinction between civilian power and what they call ‘soft imperialism’ (2005).

<sup>37</sup> For critical accounts see e.g. Pace (2009; 2007); Hyde-Price (2006); Sjursen (2006).

identity, internally held norms and engagement with external actors (as was also the case with the civilian power approach). As we have seen, norms regulate what is deemed as appropriate behaviour, and in the case of the EU the distinctive norms that are linked to Europe's identity have been defined as sustainable peace, freedom, democracy, human rights, rule of law, equality, social solidarity, sustainable development, and good governance (ibid., p. 46; see also Mayer & Vogt, 2006). If this is an accurate description of the EU's core beliefs, then, following constructivist logic, these norms are expected to influence the way in which the European Union defines its interests and how it interacts with external actors. In this vein it has been argued that "the will to engage in foreign policy activities that are *not means/ends oriented* but rather *a statement of values* is a trait that distinguishes the EU from other foreign policy actors" (Toje, 2008, p. 127, emphasis added).

In elaborating this argument reference is often made to major European treaties, such as that of Lisbon (European Council 2007a), which indicates goals such as the consolidation and support of "democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the principles of international law" (§10a-2b) as well as the promotion of "an international system based on stronger multilateral cooperation and good global governance" (§10a-2h). Or as Javier Solana has said: "I see Europe as a new form of power ... A promoter of effective multilateralism, international law and justice" (2006, p. 3). Accordingly, the NPE thesis holds that the European Union is predisposed to act on the basis of a set of particular norms that are constitutive of Europe's identity, thereby leading to the external promotion of European values (such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law) (see Forsberg, 2011; De Zutter, 2010; Cerutti & Lucarelli, 2008). Even in works that do not explicitly use the term 'normative power' this appears to have struck a

resonant chord – as Robert Kagan put it: ‘Americans are from Mars, Europeans are from Venus’ (2003; for a reply see Menon et. al., 2004).

The primary tool to promote European norms, Manners argues (2008; 2002), is persuasion (rather than force), which entails setting the right example, engagement and dialogue with external actors, and thinking reflexively about the consequences of one’s actions (see for the importance of reflexivity also Bicchi, 2006).<sup>38</sup> And if we follow a constructivist approach to IR, persuasion is most successful if it changes the deeper preferences of actors through dialogical appeals to identities and standards of behaviour, i.e. through *socialisation*. Another way to accomplish this aim is to engage with actors via cooperative institutional structures within which they may be socialised towards adoption of the European Union’s liberal norms (Lucarelli & Manners, 2006; Adler & Barnett, 1998). Evidently, therefore, a constructivist rather than a rationalist kind of social interaction (which would be based on e.g. material incentives) is the privileged *modus operandi* for a normative foreign policy. As we have seen, such a policy is presumed to eschew a means/ends orientation (Toje, 2008) and it is important to emphasise what this excludes. As Tocci characterises the argument:

*After centuries of warfare, members of the European family appreciate that cooperation and integration are the only route to shared security, peace and prosperity. This internal Kantian logic is then extended to the realm of foreign policy, engendering a normative European foreign policy. Hence, the EU is conceived as a ‘post-modern’ actor, which unlike the modern state, does not*

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<sup>38</sup> However, NPE does not *necessarily* exclude military capabilities as long as they are developed in such a way that they do not aspire to ‘great power’ (e.g. beyond the European Security Strategy of 2003 [see Chapter IV]) and are applied reflexively in the service of normative objectives (Manners, 2008; 2006). In this light it is best to consider civilian power as a *particular form* of normative power.

base its foreign policy on balance of power and zero-sum logic. (2008, p. 3, emphasis added)

Normativity can accordingly be seen in explicit contradistinction to the zero-sum behaviour that is normally associated with nation states. This does not mean that only non-state actors like the EU are capable of normative actions, but a degree of exceptionalism is nevertheless connoted by the focus on how the EU's connate liberalism steers it away from pursuing particular materialist goals in a self-interested fashion.<sup>39</sup> To cite one author: "the EU has normative interests, behaves (usually) in a normative way, uses normative means of power and achieves normative ends when it does so" (Forsberg, 2011, p. 1199).

In applying the normative argument to Euro-Med relations, reference is often made to socialisation and inclusion of the southern partners (Attinà, 2003). "What matters", writes Attinà, "is the distance of each partner and the two groups of partners from ... standards and values ... with regard to respect of human rights, fundamental freedoms, diversity and pluralism in society, settlement of disputes by peaceful means, the market economy, promotion of the private sector, dialogue and respect between cultures and religions" (ibid., p. 8). In a similar vein, Thomas Diez has argued that the EMP was "infused with normative power" (2005, p. 630). A similar drive was also stressed by officials involved in the process, such as then Spanish Foreign Minister Javier Solana, who spoke of "a spirit of openness and generosity enabling a climate of

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<sup>39</sup> We wish to draw a clear distinction between 'normative' and 'ethical' policy (and the attendant idea of the EU as a 'force for good'), given that application of the latter term necessarily involves a value judgement of sorts – in the case of the EU this involves the risk of obfuscating a constructivist ontology with a liberal political outlook. (See the special volume of *International Affairs* edited by Aggestam [2008] for more on 'ethical power Europe'.)

trust to be created in the region” (cited in Barbé, 1996, p. 37). Others still have underlined the aspects of the EMP in which they saw the construction of a Euro-Mediterranean ‘security community’ (a term originally introduced by Deutsch et. al., 1957), characterised by pluralism and cooperation between sovereign entities rather than competition and strife (Adler & Crawford, 2004). Whilst there is significant variation between these analyses, what they have in common is a fundamentally constructivist theoretical outlook in which ideational variables –pertaining especially to principles such as democracy and human rights – are the key determinants of EFP towards the south.

### ***Combining Material Interests and Ideas***

Thus far we have seen some important examples of how realist and idealist approaches have been applied to the European Union’s foreign policy. It is particularly the idealist approach which has been influential, or as Cavatorta and Pace write: “Most of the literature still conceives of EU external policy making as representative of the liberal-democratic values upon which the Union was founded and therefore presents the EU as a uniquely normative actor” (2010, p. 581). Both approaches provide compelling arguments and open the door towards important research agendas, but it is also true that each has its own particular deficiencies. In the case of the constructivist-inspired normative power approach there has been little evidence of *successful* normative engagement, which raises questions about the plausibility of a normative theory. This is further underlined by the fact that the EU sometimes acts in ways that appear to violate some of its own normative principles (Hill, 2007), thus shedding doubt on the analytical benefits of NPE (Johansson-Nogués, 2007). For its part, the realist approach seems overly reductionist, as it has difficulty accounting for the increasingly broadening scope

of EFP and the vast range of policies undertaken that do not appear to relate directly to narrow self-interests.

As this thesis argues, some of these problems may be resolved with a nuanced theoretical approach which accounts for key aspects of both schools of thought (known as a synthesis-approach [Moravcsik, 2003]). Accordingly, the problem addressed here is that despite the general acknowledgement by both realists and idealists/constructivists that *both* material dynamics *and* ideas are relevant for explaining international affairs, neither substantively include both variables in their explanatory frameworks, involving ‘the other’ mostly in an ad-hoc fashion to account for unexplained phenomena.<sup>40</sup> A consequence of such separation lies in the following problem diagnosed by Nye in *The Washington Post* (2009):

*Scholars are paying less attention about how their work relates to the policy world, and in many departments a focus on policy can hurt one’s career. Advancement comes faster for those who develop mathematical models, new methodologies or theories expressed in jargon that is unintelligible to policymakers.*

Beyond the negative repercussions for the practical relevance of academic debates (which may not necessarily be seen as a problem by all), there are some scientific detriments related to paradigmatic cloistering. As Kerremans and Orbie argue: “Scholarly curiosity and creativity may be undermined by the fact that paradigmatic insularity increases the chance that analyses will suffer from the blackboxing of causal

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<sup>40</sup> As Sørensen writes, realism and constructivism “do conduct their analyses in ways that tend to one-sidedly privilege either material forces or ideas, but they also principally agree about the presence of both elements in IR” (2008, pp. 12-13).



mechanisms, the resulting endurance of blind spots in explanations, and the failure to see possible connections between analyses across different paradigms as a way to eliminate such blind spots” (2013, p. 662; see also Jørgensen and Valbjørn, 2012; Sil & Katzenstein, 2010; Walker, 2010; Rosamond, 2006). This highlights the importance of seeking interconnections between theories, which promises to bring both practical and scientific benefits for analysts in the field of IR. In this light it is the aim of this thesis to craft a more integrative approach that can account for the development of the EU’s policy towards the Mediterranean area.

We will now discuss some existing efforts at paradigmatic interaction, which in turn will enable the presentation of this thesis’ theoretical approach, based on the work of Goldstein and Keohane (1993).

### **A ‘Pragmatic’ Approach: Some Examples**

Before discussing concrete examples, we can say with regards to the ontological question of whether material and ideational explanations can be (partially) fused that it might be tempting to refer to a Kuhnian incommensurability of scientific paradigms (Kuhn, 1962; see also Kerremans & Orbie, 2013). Specifically, it might appear that an ontological division over the ‘objective’ vs. ‘relative’ nature of politics irrevocably divides theorists, as this seems to be a key distinction between realism and constructivism (Walker, 2010). However, we argue that a significant degree of ontological commensurability can be found between the paradigms (notable in e.g. the ‘moderate constructivism’ of Checkel & Moravcsik, 2001), and the way forward that we would like to suggest in this thesis is one of pragmatism (see Sil & Katzenstein, 2010; Cornut, 2009). As Albert and Kopp-Malek argue: “a continuous movement of docking at and then leaving the harbours of established epistemological and ontological groundings is required in order to allow for the more or less skilful development of

plausible analytical pictures” (2002, p. 457). In other words, rather than being restricted by dogmatism one must focus on the plausibility and usefulness of an approach. No theory of social science – no matter how advanced – suffices to account for all the variations and exceptions that we encounter in the real world. If we accept this fact, and accordingly view our theories as analytical tools rather than metaphysical descriptions of the world (see Fearon & Wendt, 2003), it becomes possible to draw on insights from differing schools of thought to enhance our understanding of the empirical manifestations of international politics (see also Lebow, 2004; Navon, 2001).<sup>41</sup>

However, this does not mean that ‘anything goes’, and pluralism should not be pursued for its own sake (Jupille, 2006). For this reason it is important to be clear about the various theoretical sources and assumptions utilised as well as the degree of commensurability between them (possibly without striving to achieve total fusion [Moravcsik, 2003]). As we have seen, the roots of realism’s materialism can be found in the presumed biological factors that determine the contours of human interaction, which stands in contrast to the social variables privileged by idealists. It is exactly at this ontological site that we might take a pragmatic approach. In the words of Sterling-Folker, such an approach would reject “a strictly either-or perspective on the biological and the social in favour of one that recognizes the interrelationship between them as historically pertinent to both the biological composition of human beings and the production of human social reality” (Sterling-Folker, 2002, p. 96; 2000; this view is also held by Wendt, 1999 and elaborated by Moravcsik, 2003).<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> To cite Barnett and Duvall: “we strongly encourage scholars to imagine how different forms [of power] interact to sharpen empirical analysis” (2005, p. 68).

<sup>42</sup> It is useful to keep in mind here that, to cite one author, “many of the theoretical arguments about the fundamental contours of our discipline are really debates about optimism and pessimism, our very general outlooks toward the world in which we live” (Holsti, 1986, p. 356). In this regard it can be said that the

It is on this very basis that we proceed in the following paragraphs (and indeed the remainder of this thesis). Yet beyond the abovementioned risk of ‘anything goes’ inherent to such synthesis (referred to as “glib superficial poaching” by Bernstein, cited in Johnson, 2002, p. 245), there is also the exact opposite pitfall. As Kerremans and Orbie warn: “An expressed intention to engage in multi-theoretical synthesis is easily seen as a hidden attempt by some to establish a new hegemonic paradigm” (2013, p. 662). The problem here is that an integrative endeavour would imply a form of positivism which assumes that there is only one objective reality, favouring one ontological/epistemological view over others (empiricism over relativism). One way to deal with this problem would be to engage in what has been referred to as ‘engaged pluralism’, which aims to promote empathy between different paradigms by facilitating debates without necessarily seeking agreement (ibid.). This is an excellent way to create a rich debate between various authors, but since this thesis is primarily interested in exploring the real-world interactions between differing variables the synthesis-approach offers some advantages in that it explicitly draws on the coexistence between various logics (Moravcsik, 2003). This makes it possible to analyse both the strengths and weaknesses of the relevant perspectives without necessarily seeking total convergence (ibid.). Nevertheless, it could be argued from a relativist perspective that we are taking a position in favour of empiricism through our synthesis-approach, strengthened all the more by hypothesis-testing and soft rationalism (see below). We acknowledge that our approach in this thesis will probably appeal less to relativists, but we would like to underline our ambition to explore potentialities, commensurabilities and joint dynamics rather than to provide the final word on said matters. It is our strong belief that this will

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ambition to incorporate flexibility, non-conformism and pragmatism in the current research project serves as an accurate reflection of this researcher’s personality.

help analysts to better deal with the complexities of real-world policymaking (see also Hyde-Price, 2013; Kerremans & Orbie, 2013; Walker, 2010; Jupille, 2006).

As we argue below, Goldstein and Keohane's approach (1993) provides an elegant and useful way to structure our theoretical framework. Yet we may note that in the last several years a number of efforts have been undertaken to accomplish a similar task along the lines of the synthesis-approach. One example of a strategy which aims to infuse constructivism with material variables is Meyer and Strickmann's article on 'solidifying constructivism', where they claim to "pick and choose, rather than merge" (2011, p. 67). While this is a welcome effort at extending constructivism and reconciling it with some formerly ignored variables, it falls short of providing an integrative account of IR and verges towards the 'anything goes' pitfall outlined above. Barkin (2003) has made a similar effort to delineate the options for a 'realist constructivism', thereby sparking a lively debate on the potentialities for integration (Jackson & Nexon, 2004; Lebow, 2004; Sterling-Folker, 2004). Significantly, Barkin demonstrates the complementarity between classical realist and constructivist epistemologies:

*Constructivists who claim their methodology is incompatible with realism focus on the association between realism and both materialism and rationalism. Realists who claim their paradigm is incompatible with constructivism focus for the most part not on the methodology per se but on a perceived tendency for constructivists to be idealists or utopians. [...] Neither argument, however, holds up to careful scrutiny. (pp. 338-339)*

Barkin's perspective sketches out the scope for realist-constructivist collaboration, but he does not specify in detail how such work could be undertaken.<sup>43</sup> In this vein neoclassical realism (Rose, 1998) has made sustained efforts at fundamentally integrating the perceptions (and thereby the beliefs and values) of decision makers in its analysis. In this manner it has taken a step in the direction of acknowledging more substantially the influence of ideational factors, but it remains primarily a continuation of neorealism and retains the latter's focus on strategic balancing (Rathbun, 2008). As a result neoclassical realism realises a degree of fusion between realism and constructivism, but its focus on typically more abstract or distant structural variables means that it is not especially well-suited for an in-depth analysis of specific policies.

Recently, the debate over the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) has brought forward some interesting theoretical developments. Whilst authors such as Cladi and Locatelli (2013) have made the case for a neorealist explanation vis-à-vis liberals such as Pohl (2014), Hyde-Price suggests a fusion of sorts: "a complex international outcome like European security cooperation cannot be attributed either to balancing or bandwagoning, or to the simple aggregation of domestic political preferences in individual member states" (2013, p. 397). Hyde-Price's work thus makes an argument in favour of theoretical synthesis to theoretically account for real-world complexity, similar to the position taken in this thesis. Whilst his position is essentially

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<sup>43</sup> Another effort from the constructivist corner to incorporate material variables that we may mention here comes from John Owen, who has focused on what he describes as the "entanglement of US power with justice and freedom" (2012, p. 20). He draws attention to the ways in which the exercise of soft power facilitates the increase of US global influence and vice versa. What these approaches have in common is that even though they provide useful ways of thinking about ideas and material variables, due a certain amount of theoretical opacity it is difficult to utilise them to generate hypotheses for a diversity of cases.

neo-Gramscian and specifically designed for the analysis of security issues, future work should investigate further avenues of utility for Hyde-Price's liberal-realist model.

In a different vein, a middle way between neorealism and constructivism was suggested by Sørensen (2008), who argues in favour of 'analytical eclecticism' in order to address the fact that "more analysis of material change and the interplay with ideational change is sorely needed" (p. 26; see also Sil & Katzenstein, 2010). Again, we view this as a welcome effort, but its eclecticism makes replication and hypothesis-testing a difficult enterprise, as once again the pitfall of an 'anything goes' approach seems to loom near. A slightly different situation exists for an approach advocated by Richard Youngs (2004). Relying on Adler (2002) and Katzenstein et. al. (1998), he argues that the most fruitful way to combine elements of realism and constructivism is to take the former's rationalist interpretation of strategic action (with a view to self-interests) and to place it within the context of the latter's socially constructed common knowledge and understandings.<sup>44</sup> In Youngs' analysis of EU democracy/human rights promotion (2004) this produces some important results, but he provides little deeper theorisation of his approach and methodology. Finally, we may refer to a somewhat older approach that was suggested by Arnold Wolfers, who focused on what he called milieu and possession goals (1991, pp. 73-74). This has been influential as a general outlook and has found support in studies on the EU (see e.g. Smith, 2005, p. 77; 2003, pp. 107-108), but as a theory of IR it remains underdeveloped as it provides no leads on how the two types of foreign policy interact or by what mechanisms change occurs. That is to say: Wolfers' concepts are highly useful, but their operationalisation remains

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<sup>44</sup> As Katzenstein and his collaborators write (1998, p. 682): "The core of the constructivist project is to explicate variations in preferences, available strategies, and the nature of the players, across space and time. The core of the rationalist project is to explain strategies, given preferences, information, and common knowledge. Neither project can be complete without the other."

an open project (examples include Tocci, 2008; Bulmer & Paterson, 2010; Bulmer et. al., 2000).

In sum, despite a recent increase in attention for material-ideational interaction there is still much room for more precisely theorised efforts at accomplishing an integrative approach, particularly when this can be undertaken in light of substantive empirical research. This is where the present thesis aims to make a contribution to the field, taking Goldstein and Keohane's theory (1993) as our point of departure.

### **Goldstein and Keohane's 'soft rationalism'**

What makes Goldstein and Keohane's approach (1993) useful for our purposes is the fact that it was, first of all, designed to facilitate empirical hypothesis-testing, which means that it is consistent with our interest in providing a comprehensive empirical analysis of Euro-Med relations. This feature is discussed by the authors explicitly as a critique of the "antiempiricist bias" of some of the work that is done by constructivists (ibid., p. 6). At the core of Goldstein and Keohane's work lies the idea that "*ideas as well as* interests have causal weight in explanations of human action" (ibid., p. 4, authors' emphasis). Similar to Richard Youngs (2004) they do not seek to combat the idea of rationalist, self-interested behaviour, but rather aim to demonstrate that ideas exert a certain kind of influence alongside materialist self-interest – leading them to an approach that could be characterised as one of 'soft rationalism' (see also Goldstein, 1986). In order to facilitate the testing of hypotheses, their ideas are structured along the lines of causal logics between independent and dependent variables. This reveals how the fundamentals of Goldstein and Keohane's work fit very well with the ambitions and assumptions underpinning our current effort.

The mentioning of causal logics raises the question of what variables and causal chains precisely are stipulated in Goldstein and Keohane's approach. To answer this

question it is important to understand their definition of ‘ideas’. Three types of ideas are defined: world views, principled beliefs and causal beliefs. To begin with the first of these, *world views*, the authors argue that they operate on the most fundamental level, indicating “the universe of possibilities for action” (Goldstein & Keohane, 1993, p. 8). What this means is that world views relate to people’s basic conceptions of the universe and (their place in) the world, the most significant example being religion. Given the broad nature of world views, the significant influence of Western modernist world views upon most contemporary IR scholars, and the difficulty of measuring the impact of something like an ontological perspective upon foreign policy, this thesis follows Goldstein and Keohane in focusing primarily on the other two types of ideas.

The second type of ideas is that of *principled beliefs*. As the authors argue, these relate to “criteria for distinguishing right from wrong and just from unjust” (ibid., p. 9). Even though world views often contain the seeds for making these types of judgements, the difference lies in the fact that world views are usually broad enough to contain conflicting ideas on right and wrong whereas principled beliefs imply a more direct application. For example, whilst a Jewish, Christian or Islamic worldview could be utilised to justify differential treatment between men and women, it could just as well give rise to the argument that the sexes should be treated equally. The resultant principled belief that men and women deserve equal treatment is therefore much more specific and policy-relevant than the world view that underpins it. Many of the values associated with the EU by scholars working in the normative power paradigm, e.g. the Union’s dedication to human rights, rule of law and democracy (Manners, 2002), can be considered as principled beliefs. They are basic ideas about how particular things *should* be and make up an important part of an actor’s identity.



Finally, we can identify *causal beliefs*. These are ideas pertaining to cause-effect relationships which derive their authority from “the shared consensus of recognized elites” (Goldstein & Keohane, 1993, p. 10). By explicating the relationships between particular variables, causal beliefs enable purposive action undertaken in light of the desire to realise particular interests or principled beliefs. For example, if one has as a principled belief that factory workers have a right to health insurance coverage from their employer, the causal belief by union leaders that a general strike will force a factory owner to recognise this right might lead workers to act accordingly. To cite Goldstein and Keohane: “causal beliefs imply strategies for the attainment of goals, themselves valued because of shared principled beliefs, and understandable only within the context of broader world views” (ibid., p. 10).

Having defined the three principal categories of ideas, we must ask how they have an impact on political outcomes. Echoing realist concerns, Goldstein and Keohane argue that the worst mistake to be made with regards to the study of ideas is to assume that simply due to their intrinsic properties they are relevant for policy. This is a vital point for combining a material and an ideational perspective, given that we must avoid the pitfall of assuming causality on the basis of correlation between ideas and outcomes without considering whether there was true causation: *cum hoc ergo propter hoc*. As realists like Carr (1995) have argued – and as the work of e.g. John M. Owen IV (2012) has shown more recently – material interests might run analogous to such dynamics, thus muddying the waters for a purely ideational argumentation. Therefore we must be extremely careful in attributing causal significance to ideas simply because of some observed correlation with outcomes. As an alternative point of view, Goldstein and Keohane subscribe to Max Weber’s perspective that ideas “determined the tracks along which action has been pushed by the dynamic of [material] interest” (Weber, 1991, p.

280). In other words: given material interests, ideas can have a concurrent impact upon foreign policy. Three causal pathways are suggested.

The first causal pathway holds that *ideas provide road maps*. This is to say that under conditions of uncertainty, which most analysts will agree is relevant for the murky domain of IR, ideas suggest what strategies to follow. Indeed, an important question with which rational choice approaches struggle is where preferences come from (Katzenstein et. al., 1998; Wendt, 1992; Keohane, 1984). Goldstein and Keohane suggest that a look at the principled and causal beliefs held by an actor will significantly help us understand this process: “To understand the formation of preferences, we need to understand what ideas are available and how people choose among them” (1993, p. 13). Even within a purely rationalistic model of self-interested decision making this assumption holds some weight, given that with uncertain outcomes it will be the *expected gains*, based upon an actor’s causal beliefs, that will be decisive in adjudicating strategies. Moreover, whilst causal beliefs limit uncertainty by providing a theory for action, principled ideas enable purpose action even in cases where there is uncertainty regarding cause-effect chains. In summary: ideas serve as a compass or roadmap for action by prescribing causal logics and highlighting what is valued. This implies that material variables cannot automatically be translated into action: ideas determine which ones are privileged and how they will be pursued.

The second causal pathway is explained with reference to a rationalist, game theoretic outlook. After all, many games have multiple equilibria, which is why strategic self-interest (in terms of payoffs) alone is not sufficient to explain a chosen strategy. When there is a choice between different outcomes, i.e. when there is no unique equilibrium; *ideas can serve as focal points and glue*. As Goldstein and Keohane argue: “When political actors must choose between sets of outcomes that would

represent Pareto improvements for all, and when there are no ‘objective’ criteria on which to base choice, ideas focus expectations and strategies” (ibid., p. 18). A very simple example can be found in deciding which side of the road to drive on. Both left and right represent equilibria as long as everyone follows the same strategy. Pure maximisation of payoffs does not therefore explain how a strategy is chosen, but if we factor in the role of ideas as a focal point it is possible to understand how a cooperative equilibrium could be achieved.

The third and final way in which ideas can have an impact on policy is via *institutionalisation*. What this means is that the incorporation of particular ideas within an organisational structure, irrespective of how this originally transpired, will have an influence upon the incentives for action provided within this setting. This can be most evidently observed over time, when material interests have evolved and a degree of incongruence has arisen between the ideas embedded within a political institution and the interests of powerful actors. In this sense, even though the ideas and accordant procedures might have originally reflected the power and interests of influential actors, their embedding within an organisational structure can give them an independent status that could come to light with shifts in interest configurations.

It must be stated at this point that Goldstein and Keohane’s theory does not resolve all outstanding issues, nor does it provide a fully-fledged theory on material-ideational interaction. In fact, it could be argued that the authors do not sufficiently address the potential role of material interests: they are involved primarily as determinants of cost-benefit analytics without further theorisation. To account for material variables the theory assumes a baseline of sorts in which actors maximise material payoffs (their null-hypothesis), and in this sense the material side is perhaps best represented by Wolfers’ concept of possession goals as “values of limited supply”

(Wolfers, 1991, p. 73). In Goldstein and Keohane's approach, though they do not discuss the issue explicitly, the focus is primarily on absolute gains in the material realm (i.e. maximisation of the totality of gains, independent of the gains/losses of other actors). This is important to note given the significant theoretical debate surrounding this topic.<sup>45</sup>

In sum, within Goldstein and Keohane's approach the rationalist logics of material self-interest are embedded within an ideational universe, but the emphasis is placed more on proving the relevance of ideas than on demonstrating *interplay*. Furthermore, by choosing the drive to maximise material payoffs as the material causal pathway Goldstein and Keohane have relatively little to say about the debate regarding absolute vs. relative. It is expected that through our research we will be able to say more about this topic and thus to further clarify the theoretical possibilities for idealist-materialist interaction.

### ***Defining our Hypothesis***

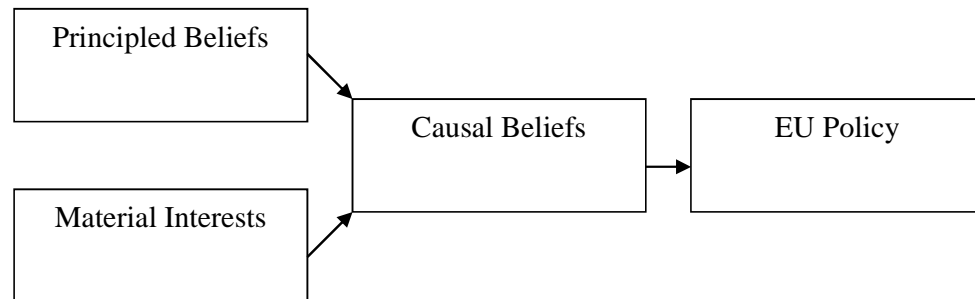
For the purposes of this thesis Goldstein and Keohane's outlook presents an excellent theoretical starting point. By enabling a soft rationalist approach it constitutes a perspective in which instrumentalism is enriched by social variables, precisely as desired by constructivist scholars. Yet it keeps the option open for incorporating material drivers and acknowledges the importance of causal (benefit) expectations in IR. In this manner it provides an excellent basis for research into the dual role of ideas and material variables.

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<sup>45</sup> Generally speaking, realists have emphasised relative gains whilst liberals prefer to focus on absolute gains (see Powell, 1991). However, though it will be useful to remain aware of the two different kinds of gains in our research, it must be noted that the theoretical debate on this topic can be "empirically meaningless" due to its high degree of abstraction (ibid., p. 1316).

In particular, we can utilise the theory, in combination with some of the previously discussed literature, to substantiate our hypothesis and thereby to enable our empirical research. The causal pathway that we focus on is that of ‘ideas as roadmaps’, given that the ‘focal points and glue’ mechanism is best investigated in the case of cooperative or multiple equilibria (mostly absent in the EU-Med case) whilst the ‘institutionalisation’ pathway comes to the fore primarily in light of an observed gap between interests and actions. The roadmaps mechanism, conversely, provides a more immediately apparent fit with our topic of inquiry. It suggests that the EU’s principled beliefs and its material interests (independent variables) are mediated through causal beliefs (defined as a shared consensus amongst recognised elites on cause-effect relationships), leading to policy behaviour. In its most basic formulation this can be represented as follows:

**Table 1: Basic Hypothetical Model for Drivers of EFP**



To further substantiate this hypothesis it is possible to draw on the existing literature on EU foreign policy. As our analysis of the literature has indicated, the major material interest associated with the EU is that of collective economic gains (Costalli, 2009; Hyde-Price, 2008; Zimmermann, 2007). Thus, the purely realist hypothesis would be that the EU’s goal of realising economic gains drives its foreign policy. In contrast, our

hypothesis posits that economic gains are a *necessary but not sufficient* variable, since we must also consider the EU's principled beliefs as a causal factor. For this reason we draw on the normative power literature to define our understanding of the EU's principled beliefs. Thus, in the vein of the NPE thesis outlined by Manners (2008; 2002), the primary beliefs considered in this research are democracy and human rights, as these have the potential to feature prominently in foreign policy and have made up a substantial focal point within the literature on Euro-Med relations. As Steve Wood argues: "The EU's influence or potential as a global actor can, to a large extent, be appraised by [its] capacity and commitment, and resulting success or otherwise, in achieving declared aims of democratization and improvements in human rights" (2009, p. 114). However, whereas a constructivist might hypothesise a significant degree of *sufficiency* for the EU's principled beliefs to explain its foreign policy, we propose that this variable is not sufficient but *necessary*. It follows that a better understanding of the EU can be reached only if we combine the two necessary variables, economic gains and principled beliefs, which *together* might constitute a sufficient explanation.

To further substantiate and operationalise our hypothesis we must specify our understanding of causal beliefs. As we have seen, this type of beliefs links means and ends in foreign policy. The concept is intimately related to the emphasis placed by constructivists on 'common knowledge' (Adler, 2002). In this vein it is key to look at the problem definitions and predictions made by policy makers, as they give access to what can be called 'institutionalised knowledge' (ibid.; see also Kelley, 2006). According to Weldes (1996, p. 277), the world is understood through shared meanings, and these meanings are represented in the "situation descriptions and problem definitions ... through which state officials and others make sense of the world around them" (ibid., p. 280). This fits well with Goldstein and Keohane's usage of the concept;

on this basis we propose to view causal beliefs in terms of the problem definitions, suggested policy methods/instruments and expected outcomes evinced within consensus amongst key European individuals and institutions. As illustrated in the table below, this operationalisation of causal beliefs also draws on what has been called the ‘textbook approach’ (Nakamura, 1987) to the policy process (important authors are Easton, 1965 and Lasswell, 1951; see also Sabatier, 2007), particularly as applied to the EU by Ginsberg (2001). Yet we are cognisant of the various criticisms expressed vis-à-vis this approach (see Jenkins-Smith & Sabatier, 2003, pp. 136-138)<sup>46</sup>, and this is why it is important to stress that we envision our model as explicating the various interconnected elements of EU foreign policymaking rather than positing strictly separated stages. It is further worth reiterating that our model is to an extent heuristic and was created to operationalise and empirically test the causal mechanism and independent variables highlighted in this study – not to provide a full theory of all stages and stakeholders involved in EU foreign policymaking.

A significant added advantage of our approach is that it allows us to appreciate the sources of policy change, given that *either* our independent variables *or* the causal mechanism that links them to policy could shift over time, leading to policy changes. In the case of the former, material and ideational variables are considered as relatively stable given how deeply embedded they tend to be, but it is possible that changes occur due to e.g. material shifts or the gradual evolution of norms.

For the second source of change, pertaining to causal beliefs, we can point to processes of ‘collective learning’ (see Adler, 2002), in which past experiences (in terms

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<sup>46</sup> See also Sabatier, 2007. The ‘textbook approach’ could be criticised for failing to identify causal drivers between the stages of the process; inaccuracy regarding the separation between different stages; exhibiting a legalistic, top-down bias; and finally for oversimplifying the fact that multiple overlapping cycles often take place simultaneously (ibid., p. 7).

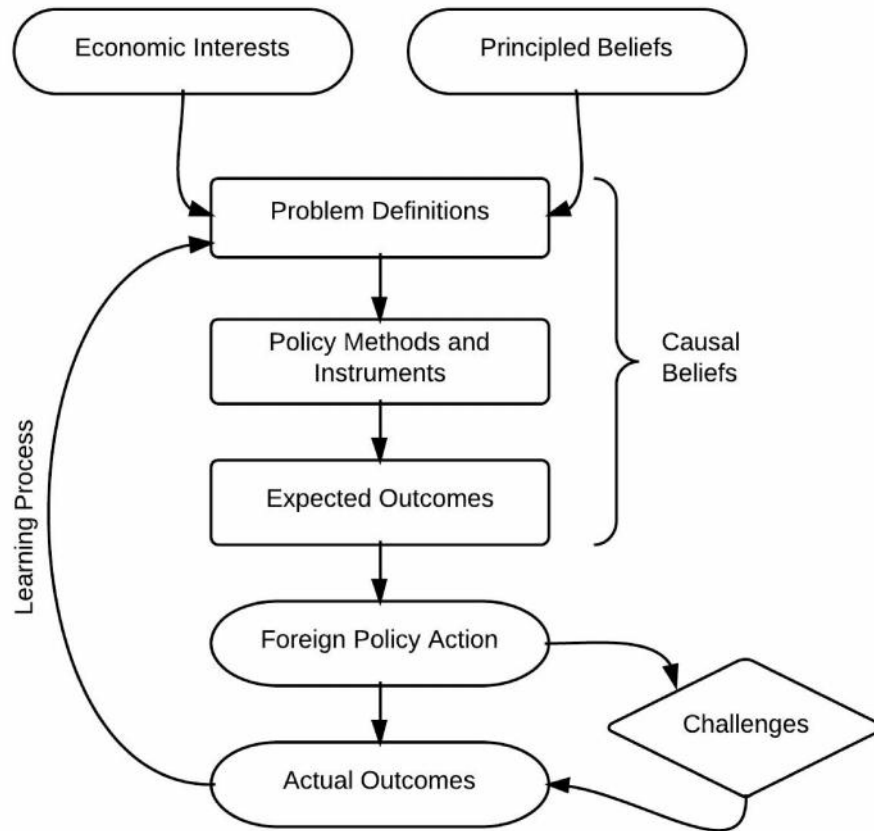
of outcomes as well as the challenges experienced at the stage of implementation) give rise to reformulated sets of causal beliefs amongst elites, driving a new consensus for future action. In addition, a potentially significant concept is that of *critical junctures*, which represent moments in time at which the non-incremental adoption of notably different or novel causal beliefs becomes possible due to significant (contextual) shifts. As Ikenberry writes: “dissatisfaction with past policy creates a new willingness by political leaders to reevaluate their interests, goal, and doctrines; disruptions and breakdown of rules and institutions create a need for nonincremental decision making; and the collapse of old political coalitions requires a search for new coalitions. At these moments, the removal of obstacles to change occurs simultaneously with the presence of impulses to change” (1993, p. 83). The upshot is that attention for past outcomes as well as the context to EU policy will allow us to appreciate the sources of change in European causal beliefs.

At this point we must underline that, since our hypothesis was formulated on the basis of the existing literature on EU material interests and principled beliefs (leading to the assumption of relatively stable *independent* variables), more room exists in our model to consider variation in causal beliefs. That said, as explained below our methodology has been designed specifically to rigorously test each constitutive element of our hypothesis and thus to keep open the possibility that other sources of change were at play.

Put together, our hypothesised model for EU policy towards the MENA looks as follows:



**Table 2: Extended Hypothetical Model for Drivers of EFP**



In sum, our reply to this thesis’ research question – ‘What drives the EU’s policies towards the MENA; European ideas, the EU’s material interests, or some combination of both?’ – is that *the EU’s belief in democracy and human rights and its interest in economic gains operate jointly through causal beliefs, thus driving the EU’s policies towards the MENA*. Our research aims to test this hypothesis and to provide further insight into the significance of our variables as well as the conditions under which joint dynamics occur. In this manner we hope to provide a fuller and more comprehensive explanation of EU-Med relations than more limited approaches are able to and to add further depth and substance to balanced theorising in IR.

## ***Methodology***

The above clarification of our hypothesis leads us to the methodological steps required to test it. Unfortunately, it can be argued that a key limitation of Goldstein and Keohane's approach lies with their methodology. As is not uncommon in qualitative research they rely on induction to prove causation, yet their discussion of evidentiary, descriptive and causal induction leaves some room for improvement. Not enough information is provided as to the criteria used for adjudging the reliability of conclusions, nor is a clear indication given of what tests are used to falsify hypotheses. For this reason, one of the ways in which this thesis aims to contribute to our understanding of how ideas and material interests relate to foreign policy is by providing a more explicitly elaborated methodological plan for evaluating causal hypotheses regarding ideas and material variables. This is the main topic of the current section.

## **Epistemological Basics**

Before beginning our discussion of hypothesis-testing, it is important to settle a particular epistemological concern. This is the potential (constructivist) argument that ideas could not be viewed apart from interests. Constitutive as they are, the argument runs, ideas are part of the very DNA of interests, making their separation futile (see Goldstein & Keohane, 1993, p. 26). Yet as the authors argue, if we were to accept this view we would have to *a priori* reject materialist arguments without significant empirical analysis. In fact, it is arguable that the epistemological differences between a materialist and an ideational outlook are minimal. Constructivism opposes the notion that phenomena can be understood independently of discursive practices (Guzzini, 2000, p. 159); the factual world cannot simply speak for itself. Significantly, most

realists would agree with this, though they often do pay greater attention to the ‘objective’ aspects of IR. For this reason we seek to occupy a middle ground, similar to the scientific realism of Alexander Wendt (1999). In this vein it has been argued that a shared interest in ‘policy’ “often leads [realists and constructivists] to similar methodological tasks” (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001, p. 395). In addition, Glenn (2009, p. 524) points out that a shared interest in “detailed foreign policy analysis” enables realist-constructivist collaboration. On this basis we hold that it is certainly possible to utilise a single theory and methodology for the investigation of material and ideational variables.

At a very basic level, as we have said, our analysis relies on *inference* or *Verstehen*, defined as: “the interpretation of meaning through empathetic understanding and pattern recognition” (Goldstein & Keohane, 1993, p. 27). This is often relevant for case studies (Johnson et. al., 2001, p. 143).<sup>47</sup> In the current thesis this is all the more so because ideas cannot be objectively measured or observed; a degree of interpretation is always needed. In order to ameliorate bias and transcend mere personal opinion, therefore, insofar as possible interpretations must be subjected to systematic quality-standards. But how can a reliance on inference be reconciled with the demands of systematically testing hypotheses?

In light of the above question, Goldstein and Keohane describe three methodological steps. The first consists of *evidentiary inference*, which addresses the fact that empirical sources might be contradictory, biased and/or incomplete. For this reason we must infer what actually happened from a wide range of sources and connect probabilities to our inferences. Secondly, Goldstein and Keohane posit the importance

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<sup>47</sup> According to Robert Yin, a case study can be defined as an empirical inquiry into a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, where the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are difficult to determine and a multiplicity of evidentiary sources is used (1989).

of *descriptive inference*, which consists of: 1) making sure whether observed behaviour is systematic or random, and; 2) assessing to what extent observed behaviour represents beliefs. The final step consists of *causal inference*. It is here that we must establish covariation between independent and dependent variables and ask whether it is possible to identify causal connections between them.

While we do not take issue with Goldstein and Keohane's basic argumentation here, we do believe that more clarity is needed in order to draw valid conclusions regarding the status of our hypothesis (particularly pertaining to the basis upon which causal inferences can be made as well as the criteria for adjudging the reliability of our conclusions). How this can be done relates closely to the format of our research, which can be described as one of *process tracing*. For this reason we will now proceed to define and explain our approach and elaborate upon its utility for hypothesis-testing.

### **Process Tracing and Hypotheses**

Our research question and theoretical framework call for thick empirical analysis of EU policy over a specific period of time, with a focus on hypothesis-testing. With this in mind, what appears as a particularly useful method is 'process tracing' (see Falletti, 2006). Importantly, it is the favoured method of Goldstein and Keohane's edited volume (1993), as exemplified by John Ikenberry's contribution, which mentions it explicitly (1993, see p. 62). Process tracing is commonly defined as "theoretically informed historical research to reconstruct the sequence of events leading to an outcome" (Farrell, 2002, pp. 61-62). As King et. al. write (1994, pp. 224-228): "A theory ... will often imply a particular set of motivations or perceptions ... Process tracing will then involve searching for evidence – evidence consistent with the overall causal theory – about the decisional process by which the outcome was produced." Therefore, simply put, what is necessary is to analyse our data chronologically and to

search in it for evidence of the variables and causal relationships that are posited by our theory. Ronald Aminzade's definition of process tracing describes the approach well, as he argues that researchers need to provide "theoretically explicit narratives that carefully trace and compare the sequences of events constituting the process" (1993, p. 108). The purpose of such narratives, he continues, is to "capture the unfolding of social action over time in a manner sensitive to the order in which events occur" (ibid., p. 108).

A major advantage of this methodology is that it allows us to take into consideration multifarious social processes, thus enabling a deeper insight into complex configurations of social phenomena. As Glenn argues: "such a method can deal with complex forms of causality" (2009, p. 542; see also Bates et. al., 1998). However, there is a potential pitfall here, and Büthe warns that "narratives must not revert to untheorized historical accounts, invoking extraneous factors in an ad-hoc fashion" (ibid., p. 487). The way to resolve this problem lies with the theory that underpins one's research, as this is what can be used to provide structure: "by making the theories that underpin our narratives more explicit, we avoid the danger of burying our explanatory principles in engaging stories" (Aminzade, 1993, p. 108).

This hints at the importance of distinguishing our approach from 'storytelling'. Whilst the latter is rooted in postmodernist critiques of positivist research methods (see e.g. Allison Brown & Stega, 2005), our current utilization of hypothesis-testing as well as our theory's soft-rational approach point towards a balanced positivist methodology. It can be said that this resonates with the propositions of 'critical realism', according to which it is now "feasible to read positivist methodology as incorporating a vision of science as a human construction, outlining techniques for persuading particular audiences of truth claims, though often with an openness to falsifiability that resonates

with late modern research sensibilities” (Seale, 1999, p. 34; see also Patomäki & Wight, 2000). This is indeed the path that seems most appropriate for this thesis, rather than one of sense-making or storytelling, rooted as they are in the postmodernist emphasis on the inseparability of values and facts and the parallel validity of multiple perspectives (Franzosi, 1998; Boyce, 1996; Polkinghorne, 1988). Thus, if we envision an epistemological continuum with a ‘pure’ positivist approach on the one hand (typically quantitative research) and an exclusively hermeneutic approach on the other (fully interpretational), this thesis stands in the centre by combining qualitative inference with hypothesis-testing through rigorous methods of falsification.

This raises what is perhaps the most important question regarding our methodology: how can process tracing be utilised to test hypotheses? We have seen how Goldstein and Keohane have identified three inferential steps, each of which is important in the research process. To add to their argument, we argue that a more explicit definition of the tests to be performed could lead to more reliable and convincing results. Process tracing is widely regarded as a major qualitative method to test hypotheses (George & Bennett, 2005; Hall, 2003; van Evera, 1997).<sup>48</sup> By generating diagnostic evidence in the form of a temporal sequence of events (Mahoney, 2012), process tracing produces what Collier et. al. (2010) call *causal-process observations*. Used in conjunction with theoretical understandings of the case under analysis, this can be utilised to establish: 1) that particular variables were present; 2) the sequence in which these variables manifested; 3) that variable A was the cause of variable B (Mahoney, 2012). In order to do so, and thus to test a hypothesis, several steps must be undertaken.

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<sup>48</sup> We may note that there has been some debate on this issue (see Büthe, p. 488).

The first step in establishing that a causal relationship exists is to verify the particulars of the hypothesised variables. This pertains to Goldstein and Keohane's evidentiary and descriptive inference stages, at which point it is necessary to provide a careful description of the outcome that is to be explained. After all, without a detailed understanding of what the EU's causal beliefs and its policy towards the Mediterranean actually were it would be impossible to assess out hypothesis.

With regards to investigating variables and their interrelations, process tracing enables three different kinds of tests: smoking gun tests, hoop tests, and straw in the wind tests (van Evera, 1997, pp. 31-32). Assuming that we cannot directly observe our variables, they are unobserved phenomena, and so we must find evidence that implicates their existence. A smoking gun test *confirms*; proposing that the existence of particular indicators (auxiliary traces) for an unobserved hypothesised phenomenon confirms its existence, typically on the basis of generalisations regarding the kind of evidence particular phenomena leave behind. As Mahoney states: "Analysts know that certain events occurred in the past because these events leave behind *traces that otherwise could not possibly exist*" (2012, p. 577, emphasis added). Thus, a smoking gun test verifies the existence of 'traces' for which the variable under investigation is assumed to be *necessary*. Alternatively it is possible to identify circumstances that are held to constitute the sufficient conditions for the existence of a variable, although this is a less common strategy due to the difficulty with identifying general theories of this order (ibid.).

Whereas 'smoking guns' are often used for historical research, such as with our dependent variable, there is sometimes difficulty with formulating strict smoking gun tests when there are few traces that could be identified 'that could not possibly exist' without the variable under consideration. Here we can make use of hoop tests. In this

format a hypothesis must “jump through the hoop” (ibid., p. 574) so as to *retain* its credibility, which means that we must eliminate (counterfactual) scenarios that if true would falsify our hypothesis. What this means is that we must seek to falsify either that *necessary* conditions for a variable to exist were present (e.g. all life needs water, so the hypothesis that life exists on Mars can be challenged by the absence of water) or that there are observable traces for which the variable itself provides *sufficient* explanation (e.g. heating a pizza will inevitably bake it, therefore if a pizza is found unbaked we can rule out the hypothesis that it was sufficiently heated). Failing a hoop test, therefore, can falsify a hypothesis, but passing one does not *necessarily* confirm it: “passing a hoop test will lend positive support for a hypothesis in proportion to the degree that it is a difficult test” (ibid., p. 576). The more rigorous the hoop tests that are passed (how unique are the circumstances tested for?), the higher the probability that an unobserved phenomenon actually exists.

However, in many cases it is difficult to perform a conclusive smoking gun test or to pass a series of strict hoop tests, in which case they can become what van Evera has called straw in the wind tests (1997, p. 32). Such a test does not confirm or eliminate a hypothesis, but it does lend some support by providing a degree of probabilistic evidence in favour of what has been hypothesised. It does so by noting the existence of indicators *typically associated* with a particular phenomenon. In this manner passing an ‘easy’ hoop test or smoking gun test can lend ‘straw in the wind’ support for a hypothesis on the basis of generalized connections between a variable and antecedent conditions or auxiliary traces. The strength of the test then depends on whether the traces found are relatively unusual or more common.

After the various available tests have been employed to verify the particulars of the variables incorporated in the hypothesis, the next step is to infer a causal connection



between independent and dependent variables. Here it is important to define a *causal mechanism*, understood as an intervening step between a cause and its outcome (Mayntz, 2004). In the case of this research the causal mechanism or intervening step between our dependent and independent variables is that of causal beliefs. We must therefore show what causal beliefs were relevant and ask whether they provide a sufficient explanation for EU policies. Given our hypothesis that material interests and principled beliefs each are necessary components of the EU's Mediterranean policies, the challenge then lies in testing whether each of the two independent variables was a necessary element in the EU's causal beliefs. The hoop test logic behind this is that "X cannot be necessary for Y unless it is necessary for all intervening conditions that are sufficient for Y" (Mahoney, 2012, p. 579).

Finally, in this research the hypothesis is not only that principled beliefs and economic interests were each necessary; we also imply that they are *jointly sufficient* to provide an explanation for EU policies. Thus, our final test consists of verifying the sufficiency of a combined perspective with regards to EU causal beliefs and foreign policy behaviour.

What this amounts to is the following series of questions that we must address to be able to support or reject our main hypothesis:

1. What were the EU's causal beliefs? (smoking gun)
2. What were the EU's policies towards the Mediterranean; did causal beliefs provide a roadmap for action? (hoop)
3. Were economic gains and principled beliefs necessary variables for the EU's roadmap/actions? (hoop)

4. Do economic gains and principled beliefs jointly provide sufficient explanation for the EU's policies? (straw in wind)

In our assessment of these four essential questions/tests, there is a certain hierarchy in that failing one test will prevent progression to the next. In this manner we aim to break down our hypothesis as much as possible into each of its constitutive elements. What is more, our awareness of the kind of evidence available (smoking gun, hoop, straw in the wind) will allow us to appreciate the strength of our argument and thus to remain sensitive to potential limitations and rival explanations. In this light the goal is to undertake our analysis in an open and honest manner with a high degree of theoretical and methodological self-awareness.

### **Evidential Basis**

What remains to be answered now is the question of on what evidential basis our research will be based. As we have already indicated, three frameworks relevant to Euro-Mediterranean relations will be investigated: the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Union for the Mediterranean. As these frameworks have been the main avenue for common European policy towards the Maghreb and Mashriq, they provide the best avenue for our empirical inquiry into this topic. Accordingly, all our evidence will pertain directly to the three programmes. The best fit with our strategy and aims is provided by written evidence. As Johnson et. al. argue: “political scientists turn to the written record when the political phenomena that interest them cannot be measured through personal interviews, with questionnaires, or by direct observation” (2001, p. 237). This applies to many of the phenomena we are interested in.

Written sources consist of episodic and running records. Whilst the former include personal diaries and memoirs, the latter include (official) records maintained by organisations rather than individuals (ibid.). For this reason the running record has a higher degree of reliability, as it is a primary source, and it constitutes our main source of evidence in this thesis (hereby we follow the suggestion of King et. al. in their discussion of process tracing [1994, p. 227]). The evidences contained in the running record can be considered as ‘facts in themselves’ – as opposed to ‘literature’, which indirectly represents facts (Webb & Webb, 1932). In terms of reliability and replicability, primary documents typically provide the most objective source of information and they are of a lasting nature (Robson, 2002). While process tracing may also make use of other sources, we agree with Falleti that “it would be hard to compensate for the many insights we get through ... the analysis of primary documents and archives” (2006, p. 6). It must be admitted here that the main challenge lies in verifying that, despite the relatively high degree of reliability of primary sources, what is reported is not politically biased or otherwise altered to give an untrue or unclear picture. The main safeguard against this is “confirming important pieces of information through several dissimilar sources” (Johnson et. al., 2001, p. 266).

Given that we focus on EU foreign policy, it is important to define what range of actions we must consider. According to Ginsberg (2001), the possibilities include: Strategies/Positions/Actions; Enlargement and Conditionality; Diplomatic Recognition; Association Accords; Development/Humanitarian Aid; Sanctions; Summits; or Inaction.<sup>49</sup> In light of these options, what needs to be considered first and foremost are

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<sup>49</sup> We apply the exclusive definition of EFP that “when an EU member state or a group of EU member states takes a foreign policy action outside of the EU context (outside the contexts of the treaties, outside areas where the EC and member governments share competence, and outside *acquis communautaire*, *acquis politique*, and CFSP), such action is not a EFP action” (Ginsberg, 2001, p. 49).

official (publicly available) EU treaties and agreements, official statements/positions from the European Commission, the Council and Parliament, Communications and reports by the European Commission, funding/aid decisions, EU programmes of relevance to the Mediterranean, and the proceedings/conclusions of bi- and multilateral meetings and summits. Many of these documents provide smoking gun evidence for the occurrence of particular phenomena, as it would be impossible for e.g. a report on a particular Euro-Mediterranean summit to exist if that summit had not actually occurred. What is more, they contain evidence that could be used to conduct hoop tests for some of our variables for which no smoking gun tests could be devised.

However, investigation of primary sources alone would be insufficient, especially given the aforementioned importance of triangulation of findings with potential alternative interpretations derived from other sources (Stake, 2005; Johnson et. al., 2001, Ch. 9). We therefore also need to take into account secondary sources, including in our case reports by e.g. the Court of Auditors and the Committee of the Regions, relevant UN and NGO investigations, (national) parliamentary questions and debates, newspaper articles, economic surveys (e.g. from Eurostat, the World Bank and the IMF), and statements of EU officials and national leaders in the press. In many cases these, too, can provide smoking gun or strong hoop evidence for the existence of particular phenomena. They provide a vital source of additional information where primary sources may be inconclusive, and they are important for generating a wider understanding of the subject matter, which may be useful in adjudging the importance of certain primary sources and preliminary conclusions.

In addition, where primary or secondary written evidence is hard to obtain or incomplete we may consult tertiary sources (primarily academic books and articles [Burnham et. al., 2008]). In providing support of this kind these could lead the way to

alternative resources and explanations that would be difficult to pinpoint otherwise, and they add another dimension for the triangulation of our initial findings. However, in terms of establishing ‘facts’ tertiary sources are the least important, given that they are the furthest removed from the ‘objective reality’ of Euro-Med politics.

We rely on a wide variety of written sources, as these contain much of the evidence needed to conduct the empirical tests incorporated in our research design. However, since our causal mechanism is made up of “the shared consensus of recognized elites” (Goldstein & Keohane, 1993, p. 10), it will also be useful to conduct personal interviews with such elites (or other individuals with a close understanding of their thinking) in order to gain a deeper understanding of their causal beliefs. The function of such interviews will be twofold: 1) to triangulate with our findings from written sources; 2) to shed further light on aspects which the documentary evidence leaves (partially) unexplained. For this reason we include in our research approximately ten in-depth (45 minutes to 1.5 hours) elite interviews with practitioners (policy makers and civil servants). In addition, we interview a similar number of observers from organisations that are closely involved with the EU-Mediterranean affairs, such as humanitarian NGOs. The choice for such a relatively small number is driven by our choice for depth rather than breadth, the fact that interviews primarily play a supportive role in this thesis, and also more pragmatically by the fact that obtaining access to elites is a resource-intensive process. Given that work on this thesis was initiated in London (UK) but finished in San Francisco (USA), the interviews initially conducted are face-to-face whereas those completed in the latter stages of the research will have been done via telephone. All our interviewees requested confidentiality, which is why no specific quotes are attributed to particular individuals. (Full details of the type of questions asked are included in Appendix A).

Best suited for elite-interviewing of this kind are semi-structured interviews, in which the researcher “has predetermined questions, but the order can be modified based upon the interviewer’s perception of what seems appropriate. Question wording can be changed and explanations given; particular questions which seem inappropriate with a particular interviewee can be omitted, or additional ones included” (Robson, 2002. p. 270). In this manner we aim to obtain a better understanding of the causal assumptions that guide EU behaviour, but it is important to be aware of the danger that an interview yields unreliable or incorrect results. This is because people might not always be willing to share the truth, or they may be unaware of certain implicit assumptions in their own thinking. With this in mind, it can be said that the validity of an interviewee’s statements “may be determined by examining their plausibility, checking for internal consistency, and corroborating them with other interviewees” (Johnson et. al., 2001, p. 275). In sum, as with the other sources of evidence there is a high degree of reliance on informed judgement based on triangulation within a wide evidential basis.

## ***Conclusion***

This chapter has explicated the rationale for our research by providing a broad overview of some of the major currents in the relevant academic literature. We have suggested that greater explanatory ability could be achieved by fusing key elements of two particularly influential perspectives on EFP, namely the realist focus on economic gains and the constructivist emphasis on principled beliefs. Based on the theory that was devised by Goldstein and Keohane we have identified causal beliefs as the causal mechanism that links our independent variables together. In aggregate this underpins our hypothesis that principled beliefs and economic interests jointly provide the best explanation of EU foreign policy towards the MENA region.

Our methodology relies on process tracing. This is a suitable for our purposes, given that it is a relatively widely accepted method for hypothesis-testing. In addition, we have discussed the different kinds of evidence that could be used to support a hypothesis (smoking gun), falsify it (hoop), or add probabilistic support (straw in the wind). Our awareness of these kinds of evidence will greatly enhance our ability to understand the reliability and wider significance of our evidence and thus to undertake our analysis with a high degree of methodological self-awareness.

In the following chapters we commence our empirical research. As clarified in this chapter, the goal is to test our hypothesis on the basis of a comprehensive, original empirical dataset. In this manner our contribution to the literature consists not only of an enhanced empirical understanding of the EU's actions towards its southern neighbours, but also of offering a different theoretical perspective on EU foreign policy and IR more generally. This will enable us to gain a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of existing influential theories and thereby to advance the field towards a more nuanced understanding of the complex dynamics at play in the realm of international relations.

## - III -

# The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

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In Chapter II we have seen how we assess our hypothesis – which posits that principled beliefs regarding democracy and human rights have worked in tandem with economic interests through causal beliefs in driving the EU’s Mediterranean policies – by undertaking four essential tests. These tests can be formulated as questions; the answer to each will bring us closer to understanding the status of our hypothesis. To reiterate, the four questions are:

1. What were the EU’s causal beliefs?
2. What were the EU’s policies towards the Mediterranean; did causal beliefs provide a roadmap for action?
3. Were economic gains and principled beliefs necessary variables for the EU’s roadmap/actions?
4. Do economic gains and principled beliefs jointly provide sufficient explanation for the EU’s policies?

This chapter has as its goal to provide an answer to these questions through rigorous empirical research for the period 1995-2003. We begin our analysis with a discussion of how the Euro-Mediterranean partnership of 1995 emerged. This allows us to contextualise our topic, but more importantly it reveals some of the causal beliefs underlying subsequent European foreign policy towards the MENA. As we will see, the European Union adopted then popular theories regarding shared economic prosperity, which shaped its beliefs regarding cause-effect relationships.



What follows is an analysis of the Barcelona Process for each of its three ‘baskets’, which will allow us to explore the contents of EU policy and to assess whether the previously identified causal beliefs did indeed provide a roadmap for European policies. Throughout the three sections we trace the role played by material interests and principled beliefs, enabling us to also undertake the third test as listed above. Our main finding is that EU policy was formulated within the context of a broad economic interest in European market expansion, with the specifics being shaped in some important ways by principled beliefs. This adds support for our hypothesis, in that both material interests and principled beliefs are found to be necessary variables.

The chapter concludes with an overview of our findings as well as a discussion of the fourth question. Here we also compare our approach with the findings of other scholars. As we will see, our hypothesis passes the tests, providing tentative support for our conceptualisation of the drivers of EFP. Several areas are highlighted where our approach offers comparative advantage to alternative theorisations, but we also discuss some of the challenges to our perspective that are thrown up by the evidence, leading us to call for further analysis to clarify the outstanding issues. In this manner we aim to have an honest discussion of our hypothesis in light of the evidence presented, serving as a key building block for our research in the subsequent chapters.

### ***The Emergence of the Euro-Med Partnership***

In this section we investigate the trajectory that led to the formulation of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. By carefully tracing the process of formulating the EU’s goals for its relations with the south we are able to gain an understanding of what causal beliefs regarding Euro-Mediterranean relations were prevalent within the EU. On this basis it will then be possible, in subsequent sections of this chapter, to undertake the tests that will allow us to say more about whether causal beliefs did indeed provide a

roadmap for European policy, as theorised in Chapter II. As we have said, this will be a vital stepping stone towards testing our main hypothesis, which is why the present section plays an important role within our overall effort.

As we will see below, the most important causal beliefs held within the EU drew upon the Washington Consensus of the early 1990s, concretised in the structural adjustment processes undertaken in many of the MENA states. Through statements and initiatives from before 1995 we are able to infer how it was believed in the EU that instability in the south was also a European problem, positing a degree of interconnectedness between north and south. It was believed that the best way to resolve the problem could be found in domestic reforms in the MENA states in the context of ‘anchoring’ with the EU, focusing primarily on the economy but also containing a political element. In this manner a comprehensive theory of cause and effect emerged within European thinking.

### **Structural Reform and the Renovated Mediterranean Policy**

Since 1972 – before which European relations with the MENA were mostly “random, unsystematic and on a case-by-case basis” (Jawad, 1992, p. 7) – common European policy towards the MENA was undertaken in the context of the Global Mediterranean Policy (GMP), consisting of a series of bilateral financial protocols. In this framework the EC negotiated several preferential trade agreements, starting with Israel in 1975, to be followed by Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia in 1976; and by Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria one year later. The agreements addressed three topics: commercial, financial/economic, and social cooperation, yet their main feature was the waiving of tariffs on a range of industrial products imported into Europe. However, the GMP was often criticised for being limited, ineffective, and ultimately primarily reflective of what we could describe as European material interests. As Tsoukalis wrote at the time: “The

economic relationship between the two sides is a typical case of a centre-periphery relationship. The centre provides technology, sophisticated industrial goods and capital. The periphery offers markets and raw materials, including unskilled labour” (1977, p. 426). In this unbalanced context it could be said that “the [GMP] accords merely perpetuated economic dependence” (Gomez, 2003, p. 34), with “echoes of colonialism and protectionist blocs” (Kahler, 1982, p. 199). There had been, in addition, the so-called ‘Euro-Arab Dialogue’ on the political level, but altogether this was regarded by many as a “complete failure” as it often fell victim to tensions between the southern countries (Salamé, 1994, p. 247). In this regard it could not be said that the EC had a comprehensive policy towards the MENA. This exemplified the still limited foreign policy role of ‘Europe’ as whole (see Nuttall, 1992; Pijpers et. al., 1988; Greilsammer & Weiler, 1987; Ifestos, 1987). Early initiatives thus contained little evidence of substantive common efforts in the MENA region.

Against this backdrop there is evidence of a growing belief in Europe that the gap between the two sides could pose a threat to European security “in its broadest sense” (European Commission, 1990a, p. 2). The initiatives and statements put forward since the early 1990s are thus important for helping us understand Europe’s emergent causal beliefs regarding its relations with the south. Two core assumptions regarding cause-effect relationships in Euro-Med politics can be distilled from the empirical evidence: 1) widening disparities between north and south would have a negative effect on Europe; 2) ‘modernisation’ of politico-economic structures across the MENA would improve the latter’s stability and prosperity.

The first point is evident in various proposed initiatives for broader multilateral cooperation between Europe and the states of the Maghreb and Mashriq. Examples include the Italian-Spanish idea for a ‘Conference on Security and Cooperation in the

Mediterranean’<sup>50</sup> as well as the ‘5+5 Dialogue’ (see Dosenrode & Stukbjær, 2002).<sup>51</sup> Taken together, they provide relatively strong evidence for the emergent assumption of a causal link between socio-economic conditions in the southern Mediterranean and Europe. Below we will see how subsequent European statements and initiatives corroborate this reading.

Regarding the second causal belief that we have mentioned, which addresses the relationship between politico-economic conditions and domestic stability/prosperity, the best way to begin to gain an understanding of the EU’s thinking can be found by placing developments during this period in the context of the economic crisis in the south and the various related IMF and World Bank-led structural reform programmes that had been adopted by several countries in the region since 1983:

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<sup>50</sup> Then Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Fernandez Ordóñez, proposed a comprehensive structure focused on politics/security, economics and social/cultural matters, driven by a desire to “avoid a possible collision course between Islam and the West, and to set up a system of good-neighbourly relations” (The Independent, 1990; see also The Guardian, 1991).

<sup>51</sup> Since the Rome and Algiers declarations of respectively 1990 and 1991, the 5+5 Dialogue has consisted of France, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Malta on the European side; and Algeria, Libya, Mauretania, Morocco and Tunisia on the other side of the formula. Its stated purpose has been the promotion of stability and security in the Mediterranean by serving as what was later described as “a regional forum for consultation, cooperation and comprehensive thinking” (5+5 Dialogue, 2003).

**Table 3: Mediterranean States and the IMF, Selected Arrangements<sup>52</sup>**

	<i>Standby Arrangement</i>	<i>Extended Fund Facility</i>
<i>Algeria</i>	31 May 1989	22 May 1995
<i>Egypt</i>	15 May 1987	20 September 1993
<i>Jordan</i>	14 July 1989	25 May 1994
<i>Morocco</i>	16 September 1983	-
<i>Tunisia</i>	4 November 1986	25 July 1988
<i>Turkey</i>	4 April 1984	-

In general terms the need for reform was driven by the large macroeconomic imbalances that had come to light in many of the MENA states. Overall these states were marked by low private investment, relatively closed trade regimes, large public sectors and a low level of integration with the world economy (see Page, 2003; Camdessus, 1996). In the Maghreb there was an average debt burden of 74.9 per cent of GDP in 1989; a number that stood at 102.7% for the Mashriq (Gomez, 2003, p. 45).

Given the growing belief that conditions in the Mediterranean were of relevance for Europe, it is possible to find increasingly clear iterations of what kind of change was needed in Europe's view to improve the Mediterranean states' disposition. In large part the reform programmes to which many of the southern states were committed were based on the so-called Washington Consensus. The assumptions of this wide-ranging consensus, which had emerged as the answer to the 1970s crisis of capital accumulation, stagflation, unemployment and the falling into disarray of the Bretton Woods system, were summarised by John Williamson (1990): 1) fiscal discipline and the importance of fighting budget deficits; 2) redirection of expenditure towards productive areas; 3) a

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<sup>52</sup> Source: compiled from [<http://www.imf.org/external/country/index.htm>], accessed 17 June 2011.

broad tax base and moderate marginal tax rates; 4) market-determined, positive real interest rates; 5) market-determined exchange rates; 6) import liberalisation; 7) promotion of inward FDI; 8) the superior efficiency of the private sector and privatisation of state enterprises; 9) deregulation; and 10) the importance of property rights (see also Harvey, 2005; Adelman, 1999). The Washington consensus could thus be regarded as a relatively extensive theory of cause and effect, describing the causes of economic weakness and inefficiency and suggesting solutions for these problems.<sup>53</sup>

How do we know whether these ideas were widespread amongst European elites in the sense of our definition of ‘causal beliefs’? Here it is possible to say that strong evidence is present in a large number of European statements and other documents from the first half of the 1990s. First of all, the European Community explicitly endorsed the reform process, making it an objective to “see that the discipline necessary for adjustment is made more socially palatable” (Matutes, 1989). A reshaping of Euro-Mediterranean relations was undertaken in this light (see European Council, 1990, §15), leading to the adoption of the so-called Renovated Mediterranean Policy (RMP) in December 1990. It was explicitly designed to serve three goals: 1) aid the process of structural adjustment in the Mediterranean; 2) coordinate multilateral aid; 3) finance the third and fourth generations of Euro-Mediterranean financial protocols. Accordingly the new protocols saw an increase in funding with a strong emphasis on supporting economic reform (the total amount set aside for the region was around €1,300 million). Morocco, for example, was promised €438m for the period 1992-1996, consisting of EIB loans (€220m) and grants from the Community budget – which was an increase from its previous protocol, in which Morocco had been allocated €324m (European Council, 1992; 1988). One of the express aims of this augmentation of aid was “to

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<sup>53</sup> For the influence of this perspective on reforms *inside* the Union see Storey (2006).

alleviate any negative effects which the structural adjustment process may have in social terms and with regard to employment” (Council Regulation 1762/92, §3.1). A special fund with a budget of €300 million was set up to further succour reform with as its main beneficiaries Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco and Jordan (see European Commission, 1996). Much of the evidence, as expressed in European statements and budget allocations, thus suggests that the assumptions underlying the structural adjustment programmes, as expressed in the Washington Consensus, significantly informed Europe’s collective thinking during this period.

While the shift towards the RMP was not particularly comprehensive – in fact, it was widely regarded as merely ‘old wine in a new bottle’ (Gomez, 2003; see also Court of Auditors, 1995, §11.76) – it was illustrative for the Community’s causal beliefs. As argued by the Commission in 1992:

*Most Mediterranean countries are facing political instability, rapid population growth, large movements of population and high unemployment. These problems, especially in the case of the Maghreb countries, are also our problems – such is their influence on the region’s security and the potential migratory pressure on the Community. For this reason it is vitally important that we continue to support the economic reforms being implemented there and promote the emergence of democratic values and practices. (European Commission, 1992a, p. 17)*<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> As regards democracy, a deficit of sorts existed due to the region’s apparent defiance of the widely hailed ‘third wave’ of democratisation (Huntington, 1991). Though each country has its own particular determinants, a number of common characteristics have been pointed out in the literature to explain this region-wide resilience to pressures for democratisation (Niblock, 1998). First of all, though economic problems have been widespread throughout the region, total economic collapse did not occur, allowing most of the Maghreb and Mashriq states to maintain large coercive apparatuses which could be mobilised

This statement provides further evidence for the growing sense of interconnection between north and south as well as the belief in the benefits of economic reform. The Commission's statement can be read as an espousal of the causal beliefs underpinning European thinking. Furthermore, it allows us to specify with more detail how the assumption of a connection between north and south was framed. It was argued that there was a need for action on a multilateral level to prevent extraordinary migratory pressures, echoing previous warnings of "disastrous consequences" if European countries did not converge their national policies (European Commission, 1990b). The Club of Rome also made a foreboding prediction: "At the extreme it is not difficult to imagine innumerable immigrants landing on the Northern shores of the Mediterranean and consisting of the hungry and the desperate" (cited in King & Schneider, 1991, pp. 62-63). In this manner a direct causal relationship between instability in the south and migratory pressure upon the north was explicitly posited. An additional clue as to the EU's thinking, derived from the Commission's statement, pertains to the role of democracy. In addition to supporting economic reform, the promotion of democratic values and practices was put forward as beneficial for the Mediterranean region. As we will see below, over time this theme was to become more significant in the EU's set of

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against internal dissidents. This was largely facilitated by access to foreign loans: "many Middle Eastern and North African states are richly supplied with rental income. It gives them access to substantial discretionary resources so that, even if the country is overall in poor economic health, the state is still able to hew to conventional economic wisdom and pay itself first, that is, give first priority to paying the military and security forces" (Bellin, 2004, p. 148). As Luciani argues (1990), access to loans furthermore decreased dependency on domestic inputs such as taxation and therefore provided a disincentive for advancement towards democracy. Additional protection from public pressure was provided by highly active secret police or *mukhabarat* services, which formed a strong barrier to popular activism. A patrimonial system (Bellin, 2004; Brownlee, 2002), manipulation of political processes (Kassem, 2004) and heavy dependence on the state for essential services further kept the MENA regimes in place, though, as we have said, the system worked in different ways in each country.



causal beliefs. In this sense the twofold emphasis on the relevance of the south to the north and the importance of reform was broadened beyond the purely economic orientation of the structural adjustment programmes, providing a comprehensive set of causal beliefs that could serve as a future roadmap.

In the evidence considered thus far we can find the seeds of an interrelated set of beliefs amongst European institutions. But how reliable is our reading? In this case, consistency across a variety of sources as well as over time – and a high degree of resonance with wider popular assumptions at the time – delimits the potential margin of error. In our judgement, therefore, we can infer with a high degree of reliability what causal beliefs were relatively widespread amongst EU policymakers. Consideration of subsequent evidence enables us to strengthen this conclusion.

### **‘An Area of Peace, Stability and Well-Being’**

Against the backdrop of the RMP’s still limited purview it is possible to note a continuing move towards a reformative European stance. Bolstered by the Treaty on European Union (see Smith 2008, Ch. 2), which furthered European integration and common foreign policy, this enabled an increasingly comprehensive approach which ultimately posited the creation of ‘an area of peace, stability and well-being’ in the MENA as its goal. By taking a closer look at the formulation of this goal we will be able to further our understanding of the causal beliefs held by the EU during this time.

An important contribution to the development of the EU’s approach was made by the proposed (but never realised) ‘Euro-Maghreb Partnership’ of 1992. Reflecting the growing emphasis on the proactive pursuit of reform in the MENA region, the Commission argued that the time had come to move away from development cooperation to the idea of ‘partnership’ in order to promote stability and prosperity in North Africa (European Commission, 1992b). One of the main aims was said to be to

support economic development in the south; the proposed means to do so consisted of an open economic area to be implemented via bilateral agreements with the respective Maghreb partners on the basis of continued economic reform and trade liberalisation. Following talks with Tunisia, the Commission concluded that “only the economic and political anchoring of Tunisia to Europe and the opening-up of Maghreb markets to each other could ensure success in dealing with the social and economic changes now under way” (European Commission, 1993). Importantly, this statement provides us with a candid look into the causal beliefs held within the EU, particularly by the Commission. Similar to Europe’s support for structural adjustment, ‘anchoring’ was explained in terms of the virtues of free market capitalism and trade as motors of regional and domestic stability. The belief that ‘modernisation’ in the south was needed in order to ward off unwanted consequences for Europe was thus further substantiated by positing that politico-economic modernisation could be facilitated through ‘linkage’ with Europe. One justification of such linkage contained the following statement: “all Member States would benefit from greater stability and prosperity in the region. This would multiply trade and investment opportunities and reinforce the base for cooperation in political and economic fields” (European Commission, 1994). Once again this illustrates the set of causal beliefs held within the EU regarding the need for stability in the MENA region, but it also hints at the influence of certain European material interests, as we will see further in this chapter.

In 1994, the Council meeting in Corfu promulgated Europe’s desire for the Mediterranean to be “an area of cooperation guaranteeing peace, security, stability and well-being” (European Council, 1994a). The ideas on Euro-Mediterranean relations that had emerged since the early 1990s could be observed in the Commission’s proposal in 1994, following the Corfu meeting, for a ‘Euro-Mediterranean Partnership’. To be

specific, the Commission defined the following priorities for Europe's Mediterranean policy: 1) supporting economic transition (in order to "make it possible to move rapidly to anchor the southern and eastern Mediterranean to the Community economically"); 2) achieving better social and economic balance (in light of "problems that transcend the economic sphere"); and 3) supporting regional integration (by "[following] up the association agreements concluded between the Community and the countries concerned with free trade and cooperation agreements") (ibid.). When viewed in light of the causal beliefs that we have identified previously, the Commission's proposal appears as a consistent follow-up to the idea that the Mediterranean states' disposition was of relevance to Europe and that a modernisation of politico-economic structures, in line with the principles of the Washington Consensus, would beneficially affect the situation. Significantly, this hints at a 'win-win' relationship between various northern and southern interests. It can be remarked that this strongly resonates with popular liberal theories of the 1990s and the generally optimistic political mood following the end of the Cold War (see Long and Wilson, 1995; Fukuyama, 1992).

The comprehensive approach formulated by the Commission was welcomed by the European Council in Essen (1994b), held while the upcoming Spanish Presidency was preparing to organise a Euro-Mediterranean ministerial conference on the basis of the Commission's proposal. The Council stated that "all relevant political, economic, social and cultural issues" should be addressed (ibid.), which was approved by the European Parliament as it argued that there were "numerous factors creating political, religious, economic, social and military instability" indicating an "urgent task to influence this dangerous development in a positive way" (European Parliament,

1995).<sup>55</sup> The necessity to act was widely stressed: then Spanish foreign minister Javier Solana, for example, said that widespread disparities of income and population growth had put together all the “ingredients for the conflict between Islam and Europe that has made up so much of the unhappy history of the Mediterranean”, while a senior advisor to Morocco’s King Hassan told his European colleagues that “we don’t have the time”, adding that “you don’t have the time either” (The Independent, 1995). Against this backdrop the budget for the Union’s new approach was finally set in Cannes (June 1995) at €4.7 billion for 1996-2000; a substantial increase from the RMP’s €1.3b (though less than the €5.5b that the Commission originally wanted). This enabled the inauguration of the new ‘partnership’ at the Barcelona conference of November 1995. It was here that the European Union’s causal beliefs regarding the Mediterranean would come to full fruition.

### **The Barcelona Declaration: Solidifying the European Approach**

Until now we have considered the emergence of the European Union’s most important and widely shared causal beliefs regarding the Mediterranean region prior to the launch of the Euro-Med Partnership. On 27 and 28 November 1995 they were synthesised in a single forum at the Barcelona ministerial conference between the 15 EU member states

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<sup>55</sup> Furthermore, there was agreement within NATO regarding the EU’s role in the Mediterranean to prevent future (potentially military) crises ahead of time: “The best means for preventing many future crises in the Mediterranean is to address their root causes – which are primarily economic and social – ahead of time. The EU is the actor which is best placed to deal with these problems and ensure that they do not escalate into major crises requiring military action” (Asmus et. al., 1996). After sustained pressure from France and Spain, NATO did also open a dialogue with Israel, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and Mauretania in 1995. This was, according to the organisation, because of “a growing realisation that the security of Europe cannot be divorced from countries of the southern Mediterranean” (NATO, 1995).

and 12 Mediterranean neighbours.<sup>56</sup> As has been pointed out in the literature, an important condition of possibility for the conference was the progress heralded by the Oslo Accords between Israel and the PLO (Peters, 1998).<sup>57</sup> To quote Egypt's ambassador to the EU: "No [peace process], no Barcelona" (cited in Selim, 2001, p. 14). The Barcelona conference could therefore be regarded as a critical juncture, as discussed in Chapter II – it was referred to as a 'ground breaking moment' by one of our interviewees (Interview with EEAS Official, 3 June 2014, telephone). It came at a moment in time when a major impediment to change was removed, while an impulse to act was provided through the causal beliefs that were iterated by EU. In this manner there was space for a relatively novel set of ideas to be put forward, and these ideas were voiced in the Barcelona Declaration. In the words of Manuel Marin, the Declaration provided a "clear geopolitical and economic scenario for a priority region in the Union's foreign policy" (European Commission, 1998a).<sup>58</sup> In the terms of our

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<sup>56</sup> These were: Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey and the Palestinian Authority (Mauretania, the League of Arab States and the Arab Maghreb Union were invited as observers).

<sup>57</sup> The Oslo discussions marked a pivotal moment in the history of the conflict. They were a secret spin-off of the bilateral talks initiated in Madrid (1991), ultimately giving birth to the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements (DoP), signed on the lawn of the White House on 13 September 1993. In the Declaration, the PLO and Israel formally recognised each other as legitimate negotiating partners and a plan was laid out for the formation of a Palestinian National Authority (PNA or PA) to administer parts of the West Bank and Gaza following the withdrawal of Israeli forces. 'Oslo' thus set out a framework for future relations between Israel and the Palestinians, sparking enthusiastic reactions from Europe: "The European Community and its member States pay tribute to the vision and courage of the Israeli and Palestinian leaders who signed this historic agreement [and] offer their continuing political support" (European Political Cooperation, 1993). A package of immediate aid was offered to the Palestinians, while it was reemphasised that the Community was the largest net contributor to the Occupied Territories. The Oslo Accords were followed by the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty of 1994 and the Taba Agreement one year later.

<sup>58</sup> This bears some resemblance to a 'grand strategy', which can be defined as a "collection of plans and policies that comprise the state's deliberate effort to harness political, military, diplomatic, and economic

theoretical framework, this ‘scenario’ could be regarded as a roadmap based on a clear set of causal assumptions.

Support for our explanation of the EU’s causal beliefs could be gained through a counterfactual thought-experiment of sorts. Assuming that all actors act on the basis of expected results and are thus informed by causal beliefs (Goldstein & Keohane, 1993), is it imaginable that the EU could have held a *different* set of causal beliefs than what we have described? Given the explicit nature of European statements on the matter (acknowledging e.g. migration and economic opportunities) and the prevalence of the cause-effect ideas described above amongst other actors and institutions with which the EU was closely connected (e.g. the IMF), the likelihood of the EU having ‘secret’ causal beliefs beyond what we have analysed appears as relatively small – particularly given the broadly inclusive nature of the beliefs described. That said, at this point we do not yet have the evidence to reliably accept or reject hypotheses. What we *do* have is a relatively strong understanding of the core causal beliefs held by the relevant actors within the EU. If we consider the Barcelona Declaration as an expression of these beliefs and thus as a potential roadmap for future policy, it is possible to further test our hypothesis.

Drawing on the Commission’s previous language, the overarching goal was described in the Barcelona Declaration as turning the Mediterranean basin “into an area of dialogue, exchange and cooperation guaranteeing peace, stability, and prosperity” (Euro-Med Partnership, 1995). To this purpose three baskets were created, focusing on

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tools together to advance that state’s national interest” (Feaver, 2009). In this light the Declaration’s adoption was described as “a clear attempt by the EU to enhance its profile as an international actor in its own right” (Dosenrode & Stukbjær, 2002, p. 131), while according to Fred Halliday the aim was “at least partly to demonstrate that the European Union could act in a united and effective manner around the sea ... that nurtured the historic cultures that shaped modern Europe” (2005).

political, economic and human issues. In the first basket there was talk of a host of principles, including most notably the importance of developing democracy and rule of law as well as respecting human rights. In addition, reflecting the mostly economic nature of the EU's thinking on the best way towards achieving progress and stability in the south, the second basket was the most elaborate and specific. It put forward the goal of establishing a Euro-Mediterranean free trade zone (FTZ) by 2010; an idea in which we can clearly identify the influence of earlier statements regarding 'anchoring'. It furthermore emphasised e.g. free market principles, inward FDI, the regulation-trade nexus, intellectual property rights and structural adjustment, demonstrating, as we have said previously, an underlying set of causal beliefs with its roots in the assumptions of the Washington Consensus. Finally, there was the 'human affairs' basket. From a distance this appears to be a topic that had hitherto not been extensively debated. However, upon closer examination we find that the issue of migratory pressure was included here, which has been shown to have played a key role in the EU's chain of causal assumptions. Yet it is also true that various other issues were included, such as cultural exchange, which had not previously been a significant part of the EU's statements. This indicates a potential broadening of thinking on the areas where reform and intensified contact could play a beneficial role, the nature of which we will discuss in more detail below.

**Table 4: Causal Beliefs in the Barcelona Declaration**

	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Political</b>
<b>Problem Analysis</b>	Widespread economic problems in MENA, underutilised opportunities for trade	Political instability, democratic deficit
<b>Action Needed</b>	Structural adjustment ('modernisation'), closer economic proximity	Support democracy and human rights initiatives, though primary focus on economic side
<b>Operationalisation</b>	Second basket: implementation of Washington Consensus principles, FTZ	First basket: slightly ambiguous, focus on domestic political reform
<b>Anticipated outcomes</b>	Prosperity gains in MENA, stabilisation of region, increased trade between Europe and MENA: shared gains	More stability in MENA

In conclusion, the Barcelona Declaration reaffirms how the European Union believed that continued instability in the south was likely to have negative repercussions for the north and how a 'modernisation' of the MENA region in close association with the EU was required to remedy the situation, generating a scenario of mutual gains for the parties involved. In our analysis these are the main causal beliefs that can be distilled from the evidence, hypothesised as providing a roadmap for foreign policy. Yet it must



be said that the Barcelona Declaration contained a remarkably broad list of issues, which raises the question of whether EU policy really was driven by the roadmap suggested here or whether it was rather the result of a more random or politically driven selective process from a large ‘shopping list’. The hoop test required to assert with more confidence whether or not this was the case necessitates a look into the actions undertaken by the EU. If these actions show a significant degree of covariance with the prescriptions and areas of emphasis of the identified causal beliefs, and if alternative explanations can be accounted for, our hypothesis retains its credibility. Simultaneously, tracing the relevant processes will enable us to investigate the role of material and ideational variables within the EU’s roadmap/policies so as to be able to further test our main hypothesis. To this purpose the following sections trace the EU’s actions within each of the three baskets, with a focus on testing the notions that the identified causal beliefs served as a roadmap for action and that within this dynamic ideational and material variables coexisted as drivers of EU policy.

### ***The Partnership in Politics and Security***

We proceed by looking at the first area of cooperation: the partnership in politics and security. Thus far we have found that the EU’s causal beliefs focused on stabilising the Mediterranean states through reform, with primary emphasis on economic modernisation but with some attention for e.g. democracy, as expressed in the Barcelona Declaration. We must therefore verify to what extent the roadmap that was elaborated by the EU informed concrete policy action as well as whether it is possible to find within its application evidence of material and/or ideational drivers.

The first basket’s purpose and remit were described in terms of achieving “peace, stability and security” (Euro-Med Partnership, 1995). Reference was made to ‘common objectives’ such as observance of international law; rule of law, democracy,

and human rights; respect for the rights inherent to sovereignty; and action in favour of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. This is a rather broad set of quite general objectives, which is why it raised some eyebrows. For example, the political and security dimension was described by The Economist (1995) as ‘waffle’, while one official asked after the conference: “Do we start a big discussion on human rights in the Mediterranean? I don’t know” (cited in Gomez, 2003, p. 78). As we will see, the most substantive, sustained action within the first basket focused on the promotion of stability within the MENA through domestic political reform. The Union’s efforts were relatively limited when compared to other areas of the EMP, but it can be said that this was consistent with the roadmap provided by the EU’s causal beliefs, putting economic ‘modernisation’ at the centre of attention. On this basis we argue that our hypothesis passes a hoop test. Our argument is further solidified through our consideration of the necessary role of ideational variables in sustaining and enacting EU causal beliefs in the first basket.

### **Promoting Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law**

To begin, let us consider the key characteristics of the Union’s approach to democracy and human rights in the MENA since 1995. As we have seen, an important causal belief held throughout the EU was that the spread of democracy and human rights would promote stability and undermine domestic tensions and pressures (see also Feliu, 2001). As the Committee of the Regions had advised (1996, §3.2):

*The growth and the reinforcement of democracy are essential conditions for development itself and are also essential if fresh hopes are to be raised and new dialogues opened in the Mediterranean. Such objectives can only be achieved within this framework by strengthening a system of democratically elected local*

*and national authorities that are able to take practical steps towards the social and economic development of their communities.*

It is notable that the Barcelona Declaration strove to avoid the impression of the imposition of European values, stressing “the right of each [state] to choose and freely develop its own political, sociocultural, economic and judicial system” (Euro-Med Partnership, 1995). A potentially more robust legal basis for conditionality (e.g. the suspension of European aid) was incorporated in the Euro-Med Association Agreements – the binding bilateral agreements that served to implement the EMP. They included a reference to “respect of democratic principles and fundamental human rights” as well as a clause that stated that “if either Party considers that the other Party has failed to fulfil an obligation ... it may take appropriate measures” (Euro-Med Partnership, 2004a, §2; §86.2). The issue was further enshrined by the Council in article 3 of the MEDA financial regulation (the EU’s funding mechanism for the EMP; see European Commission 2000e), which stated that the programme was “based on respect for democratic principles and the rule of law and also for human rights and fundamental freedoms ... the violation of which element will justify the adoption of appropriate measures” (Council Regulation 1488/96). Together these clauses made it theoretically possible for the EU to suspend bilateral relations in case of violations of human rights or democratic principles (see also Fierro, 2001).<sup>59</sup> On this basis it could be said that the causal belief regarding the need for democratic reform and respect for human rights was reflected within EU policymaking on a formal or contractual level. Furthermore, we can identify a high degree of consistency with the Union’s principled beliefs regarding

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<sup>59</sup> It must be added that in principle this kind of mechanism is generally more suited to allow an actor to keep its hands ‘clean’ in case of serious problems than to induce third parties to adopt a particular course of action (Forsythe, 2009, p. 244).

democracy and human rights, as characterised in Chapter II. Without these principled beliefs, rooted in the EU's existence as a grouping of democratic states, the Union is unlikely to have put forward a theory of democratic change and stability. This implies that as hypothesised they might have been a necessary part of the equation, providing hoop evidence for the existence of a causal link between principled beliefs, causal beliefs and foreign policy.

However, a caveat must be added. It is notable that neither the Council nor the Commission proved willing to attach political consequences to violations of human rights in the south (see Schmid, 2003). For example, when in late 2000 the Tunisian Human Rights League was put under judicial administration after it had agreed on a policy of autonomy from the authorities, the Commission argued that "the EU should at this stage use the positive partnership instruments to support all those working to improve human rights in Tunisia" with the aim of promoting "the EU's point of view, and thereby to intensify political dialogue" (Written Question E3973/00).<sup>60</sup> Another example was the arrest of 52 homosexuals in Cairo in 2001. In response to a query by MEPs van der Laan and van den Bos (ELDR) regarding the possible consequences for Egypt, the Commission refrained from giving a clear answer, arguing that "the new Association Agreement with Egypt will significantly bolster these causes by providing a new framework within which they can be discussed and promoted" (Written Question E2613/01). In addition, no measures were taken in the famous case of professor Sa'ad Eddin Ibrahim, who was accused by the Egyptian authorities of embezzling EU funds (which was denied by the EU) and besmirching his country's reputation (Weaver, 2001).

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<sup>60</sup> Tunisia's sabotaging of the League's work did, ultimately, lead to a blockage of some EU funding, but Tunisia remained the second highest recipient of European aid (Youngs, 2006a, p. 128).

Whilst raising some questions about the EU's seriousness on human rights, these examples do not necessarily undermine our hypothesis regarding principled and causal beliefs. Had the EU acted in the abovementioned cases, this might have given us smoking gun evidence for the relevant aspects of our hypothesis, proving in a strong manner the causal role played by principled beliefs. Yet failing a smoking gun test, particularly a strict one constituted by extraordinary cases such as the above, does not mean that a hypothesis is invalid. This situation does, however, urge us to take an even closer look at the 'nuts and bolts' of EU democracy and human rights promotion in order to be able to make further statements about our hypothesis.

In light of the above we can consider the so-called MEDA Democracy Programme (MDP). This was part of the European Parliament's proposal of 1994 – entitled 'The European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights' (EIDHR) – to bring efforts in the sphere of democracy and human rights together under their own budget heading (i.e. B7-70). In line with the Commission's communication to the Council and Parliament of November 1995, as well as its publication *The European Union and Human Rights in the World* (European Commission, 1995a; 1995b, p. 29), the MDP's objectives were defined as promoting and providing support for e.g. democracy, the rule of law, free media and the protection of vulnerable groups (see European Commission, 2000a).

Altogether this appears to follow a view of supporting democratisation by promoting democratic practices and sets of associated rights, as envisioned in Huntington's *Third Wave* (1991) and discussed in accounts of the spread of democracy in post-Soviet states (Pridham & Vanhanen, 1994). The assumption of such a 'transition approach' is that external actors can stimulate 'contagion' and 'transmission mechanisms' and use sticks and carrots to promote democracy (Whitehead, 2001;

O'Donnell et. al., 1986; Rustow, 1970) – a potentially forceful approach that arguably influenced the views of American neoconservatives (Berger, 2011). However, as we have said above, the wider evidence points to causal beliefs following a ‘modernisation’ logic in which democracy was more closely linked to economic development (Przeworski & Limongi, 1997; Lipset, 1959). Supporting evidence for this perspective can be found in the following statement by Manuel Marin: “The only way to quell extremism is by offering people real hope of prosperity” (The Guardian, 1995). Or as Britain’s Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind put it: “the most important way that we can achieve stability is through economic growth” (The Times, 1995; see also European Parliament, 1997, §30).<sup>61</sup> This reiterates how a hierarchy of sorts existed in European thinking on the role of economic and political factors in achieving stability in the MENA.

Reflective of this hierarchy was the fact that in terms of funding the MDP was far from a prominent programme. The budget was decided annually: for 1996 it was set at €9 million; €8 million for 1997; and €10 million for 1998, with regional projects, the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Israel as the primary beneficiaries (27%, 20% and 16% respectively) (Karkutli & Bützler, 1999). For the period 1995-1999 the total amount devoted to the MDP was €36 million; a rather small amount within the overall

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<sup>61</sup> The assumption was that increasing prosperity would lead to an enlarged Mediterranean middle class that would gradually demand greater political participation (Schumacher, 2004). This would then give rise to a political liberalisation process throughout the MENA region, bringing about the ‘bourgeois revolution’ that had thus far eluded the Maghreb and Mashriq. As Charles Issawi had already written in the 1950s: “a necessary, if not a sufficient, condition for the establishment of genuine democracy” was to be found in “a great economic and social transformation which will strengthen society and make it capable of bearing the weight of the modern State” (1956, p. 41). It is worth noting that already before the EMP was initiated this theory was deemed ‘curiously unsatisfying’ by scholars on democratisation in the Middle East (Allison & Beschel, 1992, p. 85).

budget of almost € billion (European Commission, 2000a).<sup>62</sup> In this sense – and consistent with the modernisation theory of democratic change – it can be said that the MDP’s function was to promote ‘socio-economic equilibrium’ in support of economic and political reform rather than to be a primary motor of change in itself (European Commission, 2000b). The programme operated mainly in a bottom-up manner; eligible beneficiaries included non-profit private sector organizations or associations as well as quasi-public or public bodies (or combinations thereof); in practice it was targeted mainly at NGOs. As in the other fields of the MEDA programme there were no fixed country budgets, though, notably, in the case of the MDP applicants dealt directly with the Commission (rather than through their own governments). A final characteristic of the programme was that (in the interest of local ownership) it was demand-driven, meaning that funding was granted based on the Commission’s reviewing of proposals from (organisations in) the partner states.

A number of remarks can be made based on the above. First, the fact that the emphasis on economic reform within the identified causal beliefs, with a secondary role for political reform, was reflected in the EU’s efforts within the first basket adds support for our reading of the substance of EU causal beliefs as well as the notion that they served as a roadmap for policy. What is more, within the observed dynamic there is evidence in support of a causal role being played by principled beliefs, as without a belief in the desirability of democracy and respect for human rights it would be highly unlikely that the EU would have undertaken the aforementioned programmes. While this adds support for vital elements of our hypothesis, it must be added that we have mostly hoop evidence for these assertions, meaning that we could not go as far as some

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<sup>62</sup> It must be added that it is difficult to establish definitive figures on democracy and human rights promotion given the broad definitions used by the EU and the overlap between different budgetary external aid chapters.

of the aforementioned authors in the normative power school have (see Chapter II) in making claims regarding the *decisive* role played by ideational variables. What we *can* say is that on the basis of the empirical data, we have not been able to rule out that principled beliefs form a necessary component of the EU's Mediterranean policies. Given our evidence, it is plausible that EU principled beliefs informed the causal beliefs that provided the roadmap for Euro-Med relations. This was further confirmed through interviews with EU officials: when asked each identified human rights and democracy as an indispensable element of the EMP (Interviews with EEAS Officials, 3 & 6 June 2014, telephone). Even more critical MEPs have recognised this dimension as vital in the Barcelona Process from the very start, though they have been in favour of further strengthening (Interview with assistant to Chairwoman of the EP Human Rights Subcommittee, November 2011, Berlin).

Though limited in resources and mostly of instrumental utility (playing a supporting role for economic reform), the MDP had some potential to be a useful grassroots-focused instrument. Yet a strong downside of the EU's approach was its dependency on pre-existing civil society dynamics, which made it difficult to effectuate change in authoritarian contexts. Resultantly, precisely the most problematic states – e.g. Syria and Algeria – received a minimum of funding due to a lack of proposals. In addition the programme was plagued by a number of bureaucratic problems. (Prospective) recipients often complained about cumbersome procedures and severe delays in the disbursement of payments, which posed a limitation to the potential impact and appeal of the Commission's funding.<sup>63</sup> What is more, there were no country-

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<sup>63</sup> As one audit of the Union's democracy assistance concluded: "the administrative guidelines (budgetary and reporting requirements) and procedures (decisions, payments) specified by the Commission department more often put an extra burden on the partners rather than helping to strengthen them" (Court of Auditors, 2000, §30).



specific predefined priority areas, which obscured the Commission's selection criteria and allowed the Mediterranean regimes to hinder the submission of proposals from non-government sanctioned actors. Finally, conspicuously and consistently absent amongst the recipients of funding were politically more sensitive organisations, primarily those with a religious basis, in spite of the MDP's potential to operate without the direct involvement of the partner states (Bicchi & Martin, 2006; Youngs, 2006a).<sup>64</sup> In light of these factors the European approach was relatively widely criticised for lacking in robustness (see Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network, 2002).

Against this backdrop it is perhaps not surprising that little success could be registered as regards the political circumstances in the MENA. As the European Parliament glumly concluded: "the human rights situation not only has not improved but in some states has deteriorated even further" (1999). The problem was recognised by the European Commission (2000a), which advised a strengthened and more prominent policy on human rights, democracy and good governance. However, the shifts in European policy after 2000 did not wholly resolve the fundamental aporiae. The failure of what the Commission had called the 'traditional' or cooperative approach (ibid.) contributed to a comprehensive recalibration (decentralisation) of activities in the sphere of human rights/democracy in 2001. It was decided to abandon the geographical distinctions within the EIDHR in favour of a thematic categorisation, leading to the dismantlement of the MEDA Democracy Programme (see Council Regulation 2698/2000).<sup>65</sup> In the terms of our theoretical framework, this could be regarded as a

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<sup>64</sup> An additional problem that might be mentioned was that there did not appear to exist a clear legal basis for the Commission's activities; this issue was only resolved in 1999 (see Council Regulation 976/1999).

<sup>65</sup> This coincided with the move towards deconcentration of project management since the creation of 'EuropeAid' on 1 January 2001 (European Commission, 2001a). The four themes that were identified for 2002-2004 were: 1) strengthening democratisation, good governance and the rule of law; 2) abolition of the death penalty; 3) combating torture and impunity and support for international tribunals and criminal

potential evolution within the EU's causal beliefs regarding its strategy with respect to human rights and democracy. Yet due to organisational issues the new programme was rather slow to take off in the Maghreb and Mashriq: until 2003 the initiative could not be fully operationalised because of organisational changes and a lack of human resources. For this reason, further examination of the relevant initiatives falls outside of the timeframe considered in this chapter, which is why they will be considered in more detail in Chapter IV.

**Table 5: Principled Beliefs in the EMP**

<b>EU problem definition</b>	Insufficient respect for human rights and little adoption of democratic practices across MENA region
<b>Policy Methods and Instruments</b>	Declarative diplomacy, conditionality, support existing (grassroots) initiatives
<b>Expected outcomes</b>	Gradual improvement of situation, but hopes primarily pinned on spill-overs of economic modernisation
<b>Evidence in support of hypothesis</b>	Emphasis on human rights/democracy in EU declarations and statements, MEDA financial regulation, MEDA Democracy Programme (hoop test passed)
<b>Challenges</b>	Limited budget, lack of action on notable cases, economic dimension prioritised (smoking gun test failed)
<b>Actual outcomes</b>	No progress, in some cases even regression
<b>Conclusion</b>	Hoop evidence suggests necessary but not sufficient role of principled beliefs, but significant challenges remain

courts; 4) combating racism and xenophobia, and promoting minority and indigenous peoples' rights (see: European Commission, 2001f; 2003a).

To conclude the present section, we can say that our hypothesis has passed two tests on the basis of the evidence presented. First, we have seen how the Union's enactment of the first basket reflected key elements of its causal beliefs as represented by the 'modernisation' thesis, the assumptions of which we have explored in this chapter's first section. Close convergence between causal beliefs and actions, with the former providing a roadmap for the latter, means that we could assess the role of our independent variables. In this respect we have been able to find broad evidence that supports the hypothesis that principled beliefs regarding democracy and human rights were *necessary* for explaining the outcomes considered. What the evidence does not give us, however, is a strong basis from which to assert that principled beliefs were *sufficient* for explaining EU policy.

### ***Euro-Mediterranean Economics***

As we have seen, the EU's approach was underpinned by a modernisation logic in which economic progress was regarded as a *sine qua non* for further improvement of the regional situation. It was explicitly stated on numerous occasions that the best way to achieve such economic progress was through the process of structural adjustment. Furthermore, the EU's roadmap posited that 'anchoring' the MENA states to Europe, through the construction of a FTZ, would facilitate economic growth favourable to both sides. The Commission voiced this belief as follows: "The creation of a free trade area by the target date of 2010, agreed at Barcelona, is an essential instrument to further approximation and to raise the prosperity level of the Partners" (1997, p. 6). The Barcelona Declaration thus listed "acceleration of the pace of sustainable socio-economic development" and "reduction in the development gap" as important objectives for the second basket (Euro-Med Partnership, 1995). This reflected the

previously identified causal beliefs that the growing gap between north and south was harmful for Europe and that a programme of reform-driven approximation could fix the situation. On this basis the nexus of reform/free trade constituted the ‘bread and butter’ of the roadmap put forth by the EU in the Barcelona Declaration.

In the present section we further investigate this vital dimension of the EMP by tracing developments pertaining to the FTZ, seeking to determine whether the relevant evidence lends support for our hypothesis regarding the role of causal beliefs as well as the notion that material interests played a necessary role in driving the EU’s policies. With regards to the former, we demonstrate that the evidence provides strong hoop support for the argument that the previously identified causal beliefs constituted a roadmap for action. In particular, the EU focused on structural adjustment and foreign investment as drivers of economic progress, which resonates with the causal beliefs that were expressly stated by European elites. Regarding the role of our independent variables, we will see that within the European focus on foreign direct investment (FDI) the evidence points towards an important role being played by economic self-interests, thus further supporting vital elements of our main hypothesis. In the second part of this section will discuss some of the limitations of the EU’s approach as well as the policy reformulations inspired thereby, which sheds further light on the validity/feasibility of our hypothesis and indicates some important shifts in European policy.

### **The Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Zone**

The creation of a Euro-Mediterranean FTZ was, according to the Commission, “not only an ambitious objective, but also a necessity for the Mediterranean partners” (2000b, §I.4; 2000c). This statement can be explained with reference to the belief that only through economic modernisation and anchoring with Europe the MENA states would be able to grow economically. The target date for the FTZ was 2010, with a

primary focus on manufactured (industrial) products. The industrial sphere was, as the many critiques of the second basket have pointed out, an area in which Europe had a clear competitive advantage, and the Med states already enjoyed preferential treatment for industrial goods imported into the EU (see Kébabdjian, 1995; Kébabdjian et. al., 1994). As a result, ‘shallow’ economic integration (removal of tariff barriers) was not sufficient to raise standards of living in the south, for the low level of competitiveness and the already existing system of market access did not permit the Mediterranean partners to benefit from such an arrangement. The immediate expected consequences of removal of tariffs and increased competition with European producers included a loss of fiscal revenue, increased unemployment, and (partial) closure of enterprises. Empirical research on Egypt, for example, confirmed that liberalisation without correspondent elimination of regulatory barriers and red tape would lead to a direct welfare loss over benchmark 1994 levels (Hoekman & Konan, 1999).<sup>66</sup>

The European Union appears to have been at least partially aware of these dynamics, for rather than a boost in Mediterranean exports one of the most important mechanisms through which free trade was assumed to lead to prosperity was foreign direct investment.<sup>67</sup> For example, at the Euro-Med conference for the Ministers of

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<sup>66</sup> In one IMF report the Med countries’ strategy was accordingly described as a ‘gamble’: “the benefits ... could be substantial, but they are uncertain [and] will come relatively late” (Ghesquiere, 1998, p. 22). Given the generally penurious situation prevalent amongst the southern states, however, this ‘gamble’ appeared as their only option – as one southern official said: “We are being practical and realistic ... At least at this point we would like to increase our exports to the EU and have some privileges” (cited in Gomez, 2003, p. 60).

<sup>67</sup> FDI represents an important aspect of economic globalisation as it indicates a lasting commitment to a foreign market. It signifies the act of an investor in one country to gain an interest of at least 10% in an enterprise located in another country (Eurostat, 2002a, p. 17). This includes ‘vertical’ FDI, where a company allocates part of its business to a different country, ‘horizontal’ FDI, where production is moved closer to foreign markets, and the complete or partial purchase of a company through merger or acquisition.

Industry (4 October 1998) it was argued that “one of the main vehicles for economic and social development and the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean area of prosperity is private investment” (Euro-Med Partnership, 1998b). As the EU Presidency put it, private investment played “a leading role in ensuring the success of the Partnership” (Euro-Med Partnership, 1998c, §12). Thus, the EU’s modernisation roadmap was operationalised with a focus on foreign investment; not coincidentally a key element of the structural adjustment programmes led by the IMF as well as the wider Washington Consensus.

On the basis of these assumptions there was strong emphasis on eliminating ‘policy induced barriers’ to FDI in the Mediterranean region (see European Commission, 2000b, §I.4). In this vein it is not surprising to read in one IMF paper that *perhaps the most important contribution* of the Euro-Med Association Agreements was that they helped promote “a business environment that stimulates domestic and foreign investment” (Ghesquiere, 1998, p. 5).<sup>68</sup> In this manner free trade and structural adjustment were fundamentally intertwined, for *ceteris paribus* removal of tariffs would not directly lead to greater investments and therefore not to enhanced prosperity.<sup>69</sup> The

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<sup>68</sup> To square the circle, we can say that the European Parliament agreed with the need to promote FDI, as illustrated by its later remarks that “*it is absolutely vital* to carry through all the economic, legal and administrative reforms *needed to create a favourable framework for private investment* in all the Mediterranean partner countries” (European Parliament, 2002, emphasis added).

<sup>69</sup> According to one paper published by the IMF it was necessary for the Med partners to meet a wide range of preconditions to benefit from liberalisation, including macro-economic stability, low reliance on trade taxes, a low level of external debt, a high initial level of openness to trade and investment, a liberal regulatory framework and a comprehensive social safety net (Nsouli et. al., 1996). It is difficult to quantify conclusively the costs of these complex requirements, yet an indication can be found in the case of Tunisia. Here, the FTZ-related adjustment costs for the labour market were estimated at 4% of GDP annually, while the upgrading of the Tunisian industry was reported to cost approximately 2% of GDP (Al-Ahram, 1999). For illustrative purposes: with a GDP of 20.8 billion US dollar (current) in 1999, this amounted to \$1.2 billion, or approximately \$132 per inhabitant per year. (This calculation is based on

ESC thus discussed the “inextricable link” between a free trade area and “implementation of a concurrent structural reform programme” (Economic and Social Committee, 1995, §0.5), while according to EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy free trade without adjustment would be like “a top range Ferrari without engine oil” (Euro-Med Partnership, 2003a). As the Council said: “The elimination of barriers will foster economies of scale and greater market opportunities thus encouraging investment” (Council Decision 96/706/EC, §9, emphasis added). These statements provide strong evidence regarding the interlocking of EU causal beliefs with then prevalent assumptions on economic modernisation, giving a candid look into the causal beliefs that lay at the heart of European thinking on the MENA.

To what extent were these principles and the roadmap they provided reflected in EU policy? Council Regulation 1488/96 provides a good place to start:

*[T]he ultimate establishment of a Euro-Mediterranean free-trade area is likely to foster stability and prosperity in the Mediterranean region. [This] may involve profound structural reforms, [making it] necessary to support the efforts that have been or will be undertaken by the Mediterranean partners to reform their economic, social and administrative structures.*

If the EU really acted on the basis of the Barcelona roadmap, it must be possible to find evidence of support being given for structural adjustment. It is no exaggeration to say that such evidence is plentiful. In the 1995-1999 period, total EU support for structural adjustment and economic reform accounted for about 45% of the MEDA budget, with

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World Databank information, available at: [<http://databank.worldbank.org>], accessed 12 November 2011.)

an additional 29% devoted to ‘socio-economic balance’, including sectoral reform in health and education (European Commission, 2000b). Special ‘Structural Adjustment Facilities’ (SAFs) were set up and implemented in five countries (Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Jordan and Lebanon) with a total budget of €520 million. The European Investment Bank (EIB) was also strongly involved by providing loans to supplement MEDA aid (see European Commission, 2001d). These loans were generally focused on issues such as infrastructure, the private sector (SMEs and the industrial sector), and the provision of risk capital, i.e.: areas which in the Union’s view offered “the greatest leverage in order to encourage structural reform and promote private initiatives” (European Investment Bank, 2005a, p. 4). In interviews with EU officials, reference was also made to the EIB as one of the key instruments in the Union’s toolbox (Interviews with EEAS Officials, 3 & 16 June 2014, telephone).

Further to succour this agenda and to prepare the Med partners for free trade, since 1996 there were biennial meetings between the European and Mediterranean Ministers of Industry, culminating in their endorsement of a working programme in Limassol (Cyprus) in June 2000.<sup>70</sup> Another policy tool was the Euro-Mediterranean working group on industrial cooperation, chaired by the DG Enterprise (European Commission, 2002c; 2002d; 2002e). A number of meetings took place in the period 1995-2000, which mostly led to ‘soft’ initiatives such as exchanges of information, workshops and awareness-raising. A somewhat tougher approach was allowed by the fact that the Union’s SAFs did contain some provisions for conditionality, enabling the

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<sup>70</sup> This plan was focused on issues such as the legal and administrative frameworks, industrial zones and regional cooperation of economic operators (European Commission, 2000d).



EU to connect the disbursement of funds to the acceptance and/or achievement of specific goals of relevance for the FTZ.<sup>71</sup>

More specifically still, within the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements we can find concrete evidence of the vital role played by structural adjustment. For Morocco the AA held that bilateral aid served to “buttress structural adjustment programmes in the Mediterranean countries” (Euro-Med Partnership, 2000b, §76), and the first meeting of the EU-Morocco Association Council concluded that EU aid was pursued in the context of “reform of [Morocco’s] structures and the modernisation of its economy” (Euro-Med Partnership, 2000c). In the case of Jordan it was stated that “promoting reforms designed to modernise the economy” and addressing “the economic repercussions” of structural adjustment formed the focus of financial cooperation (Euro-Med Partnership, 2002c, §86; see also European Commission, 2001c), while Algeria’s Association Agreement stressed that the parties would work “in particular [with] the international financial institutions” to shape policy instruments “intended to accompany development and liberalisation policies for the Algerian economy” (Euro-Med Partnership, 2005a, §80).

In aggregate, it is our belief that the empirical data considered here could be considered as strong evidence in support of the hypothesised link between causal beliefs and foreign policy. In this regard a key part of our hypothesis passes a relatively strong hoop test – which could perhaps even be considered a smoking gun test. The overlap between EU and IMF policies was so significant that the Court of Auditors asserted that

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<sup>71</sup> An important example was the demand that the Jordanian Cabinet accept a European rule on competition. Yet despite the Cabinet’s acceptance of the requirements regarding competition, the Jordanian Parliament rejected the law in question in April 2001. Formally, therefore, Jordan had complied with the conditions laid down by the EU, but the non-implementation of the law rendered conditionality largely symbolic and mostly focused on “intentions rather than actual results to be obtained” (Court of Auditors, 2002, III).

it was unclear what assumptions were “shared with the Bretton Woods Institutions, and which [were] the Commission’s alone” (2002, III). But what was the role of material interests and/or principled beliefs in the observed dynamic? Throughout this section, it has been evident that the Union’s emphasis has been on structural adjustment, with special attention for foreign investment. It is this aspect of the EMP that has been highlighted most widely by those asserting that the EU was fundamentally driven by its economic interests (see Chapter II). After all, the argument that free trade would benefit the MENA lines up almost perfectly with the European Union’s economic interest in increased market access. Furthermore, this outlook resonates with wider critiques of neoliberal economics and the policies promoted by the IMF, which argue that ‘modernisation’ favours foreign investors at the expense of local interests (Klein, 2007; Harvey, 2005; Duménil & Lévy, 2000). Where does this leave our analysis? Three points can be made.

Firstly, given the evidence, it is definitely possible to trace a connection between shared European economic interests, causal beliefs regarding economic modernisation, and EU foreign policy. Given that this is a requirement for our hypothesis to be valid, we believe that our notion of material interests playing a *necessary* role in the EU’s MENA policy passes the test. After all, it is unlikely that the EU would have formulated and enacted its roadmap as it did, particularly the focus on FDI, without the presence of a collective interest in economic gains. In this regard it seems plausible to say that without an appreciation of the EU’s economic interests it would be difficult to fully account for the nature of its Mediterranean policy. This was well-understood in the MENA, or in the words of Egypt’s former representative to the EU, Gamal Bayoumi: “We are a huge market of 60 million people, and if you want to defend your place in it then you have to help us” (Financial Times, 1997a).

Secondly, we must note that the evidence does not wholly support the idea that economic interests *fully account* for the EU's behaviour. No smoking gun evidence is present in what we have investigated until now that would suggest a deliberate form of economic exploitation, particularly not given how the EU has defined negative socio-economic conditions in the south as an area of particular concern. This strengthens our hypothesis that economic interests are necessary but not sufficient for explaining EU policy towards the MENA.

Thirdly, despite the valuable insights gained thus far, in order to be able to say more about the feasibility and validity of our hypothesis it is necessary to consider more evidence. This is so because, as we will see, over time a number of problems emerged with the EU's approach within the second basket. Particularly in its response to these issues – i.e. within the policy changes engendered by the dynamics of the situation – is it possible to find further evidence that is of relevance to our hypothesis.

### **Material Limitations: Where is the Gravy?**

As we have seen, the European Union spent a great deal of attention on structural adjustment. That said, it is also evident that the onus lay primarily on the Mediterranean partners. As an example, consider the indicative figure of \$1.2 billion adjustment costs *per year* in Tunisia vs. the bilateral MEDA sum of €93.7m *for 1995-2001*. It is true that a further €1.1 billion was given to Tunisia in loans (European Commission, 2002a), but a gap still persists. In another example, a study on the situation in Morocco found that 60% of the industrial sector was likely to disappear if free trade was implemented unless the EU would cover \$5.4 billion transition costs (Al-Ahram, 1999). Aid to Morocco amounted to €16.6m for '95-2001 with €1.5b in loans (European Commission, 2002a). Another way to look at the situation is to consider the north-south deficit of trade, which stood at €18.5 billion in 1995 alone (Eurostat, 2003; see also

Eurostat 2002b). Finally, it can be said that import duties represented an important source of income for the partner states (especially Lebanon, Jordan, Tunisia and Algeria), which meant that their elimination would bring about a significant loss of revenue (Schumacher; 2004, p. 14). “In general”, said the Court of Auditors, highlighting the overall problem, “the amount of [European] support is not based on the specific cost of the associated reform programme” (2002, III). Lebanon’s Minister of the Economy, Yassin Jaber, diagnosed the problem early on:

*I don’t see a single European company coming here. All I see are delegation after delegation wanting to sell us their products. Going into a free trade agreement with the EU means we lose customs revenues, we get little aid and ... the European private sector won’t come here. Europe is very protective on agriculture and they are superior in industry. So where is the gravy? (Financial Times, 1997b)*

This statement hints at the suspicion that the EU was merely pursuing its economic interests, sending trade delegations and utilising relative strengths without sufficiently aiding the MENA states’ reform efforts. The vital question is therefore whether it was genuinely believed that the EMP could help the Mediterranean partners or whether the EMP had been a foil for achieving economic gains all along. In resonance with our hypothesis, the evidence suggests that the answer lies somewhere in the middle.

First of all, we must note that the positive estimations that had underpinned the Barcelona Declaration did not align with reality as it unfolded over time. As one Jordanian official said in 1999: “we need two things: money, and economic programs. We have neither of these in abundance. In fact, we have neither of them at all” (Haaretz,

1999). Altogether the case of Jordan is useful to further illustrate trends in the region, given the Hashemite Kingdom's status as a 'model reformer'. Commissioner Chris Patten, for example, described it as "one of our most committed and exceptionally active Barcelona partners" (Patten, 2002). However, despite the fact that the country's SAP had been credited with "alleviating poverty in the second half of the 1990s" (Zakharova, 2004, p. 102) – and the Kingdom had been called "another success story in the making" (Jordan Times, 2003) – the positive link between structural adjustment and wider national prosperity did not bear out (see Harrigan & El-Said, 2010; Harrigan et. al., 2006). In 1999 unemployment still stood at 14.4% officially – with a reported 27% as the actual rate (Haaretz, 1999) – and upon concluding a new agreement with the Kingdom in 2002 even the IMF could not deny that the rate of unemployment remained stubbornly high (IMF, 2003). While there was some controversy over the exact incidence and intensity of poverty and unemployment in the country, it was clear that both had gone up significantly since the late 1980s: according to a dual World Bank-Islamic Development Bank evaluation the poverty headcount had risen from 3% of the population in 1987 to around 12% in 2000 (Hassan & Al-Saci, 2004, p. 2). The 2002 'Poverty Alleviation Strategy' of the Jordanian government took an even more glum view, estimating poverty to be between 15 and 30% and rising, but adding that it was unknown "exactly how many Jordanians are poor today, where they live, or what their demographic characteristics are" (Jordan Ministry of Social Development, 2002, p. 14). The apparent crisis was further compounded by riots in the city of Maan from the end of 2002 (International Crisis Group, 2003; Center for Strategic Studies, 2007; 2003), while an open letter to the Prime Minister called the SAP "an international conspiracy ... by foreigners in the IMF" (cited in Nazzal, 2005, p. 10).<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> The Jordanian parliament was suspended between June 2001 and June 2003, and during this period

It can be said that the Jordanian example was characteristic for the wider regional situation. The Arab Human Development report of 2003 mentioned the persistence of “grossly unequal distributions of income, wealth and power”, estimating that both poverty and income inequality were on the rise throughout the region (UNDP, 2003, p. 139). In addition, it was said that despite a lack of reliable data (as illustrated by the various accounts of Jordan’s poverty level) there was evidence that “poverty in Arab countries is more widespread than is usually reported in international data bases, particularly those compiled by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund” (ibid., p. 139). On the political level, it was argued that “market-oriented reforms ... have reinforced clientelism, corporatism, and authoritarianism, as well as bringing a heavy dose of repression” (King, 2003, p. 6). For example, in the case of Egypt – another vanguard actor as regards reform – there was strong suppression of organised labour, public services were languishing, and around 20% of the population lived on less than \$2 a day while elites made large profits by buying up state-owned assets far below their market value (Mitchell, 2002, Ch. 9).

What is the significance of these developments for our argument? Importantly, what they reveal is how the EU’s causal beliefs regarding the beneficial effects of economic modernisation were *factually inaccurate*. Contrary to what had been expected – yet in resonance with some of the aforementioned critiques of neoliberal economics (Klein, 2007; Harvey, 2005; Duménil & Lévy, 2000) – reforms had done little to improve national prosperity (see Schlumberger, 2002; Pfeifer, 2000; Kienle, 1998,

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King Abdullah decreed approximately 211 provisional laws and amendments, some of which adversely affected civil liberties (Amnesty International, 2002), but many of which were supportive of the structural adjustment process (Choucair, 2006).

Martinez & Hibou, 1998).<sup>73</sup> The associated ambition of raising FDI also remained unfulfilled: in 2001 the region attracted merely 1.2% of European foreign investment, while candidate-members and Mercosur accounted for 7 and 8% respectively (Quefelec, 2003).<sup>74</sup> From this perspective it could be said that the reality looked more like a ‘lose-lose’ situation than the win-win scenario that had originally been predicted: neither European economic interests nor stability in the MENA were significantly boosted by the EMP.

Under these circumstances the Commission acknowledged the persistent difficulties in the region:

*Today the economic situation of the Mediterranean partners can be summarised as follows: (i) progress in macroeconomic stabilisation and market liberalisation has been considerable, though unequal across the region; but (ii) real GDP growth – mostly in the range of 2 % per annum – has been insufficient to raise living standards, given the rapid population growth, and has proven quite volatile since most economies are still agricultural; and (iii)*

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<sup>73</sup> Tacitly, the problem was acknowledged in the World Bank’s shifting orientation towards public investment in infrastructure, health and education (see e.g. Hassan & Al-Saci, 2004).

<sup>74</sup> Investment in the Mediterranean partners amounted to less than 2% of total extra-EU FDI flows over the period 1994-2001 (which was, however, equivalent to about twice the United States’ investment in the Maghreb and the Mashriq). This situation prompted FEMISE to state in one of its reports that that “the 1990s will remain a decade of missed opportunities for the [Mediterranean partners], despite the huge growth in long-term investment toward developing or emerging countries” (2004, p. 10). Major problems were encountered in exactly those aspects which the SAPs aimed to address – as Joffé has argued, there were “problems of comparative advantage and returns, besides issues of corruption and governance” (2005, pp. 41-42). In addition it could be said that the uncertain political situation made investment unattractive (FEMISE, 2004, p. 10).

*unemployment, ranging from 15 to 20 %, is especially acute among the young and educated, and in urban areas.* (2001d, p. 10)

Our analysis is further corroborated by some of the conclusions that were reached by the ESC, which said that the weaknesses of the EMP were largely due to “overestimating the part which the Euromed partnership could play in the social development of the MPCs” (Economic and Social Committee, 2002, §3.5). It thus became increasingly clear that the assumptions upon which EU policy was based needed rethinking. As the European Parliament argued: “[I]n view of the considerable international debate concerning the nature of IMF and World Bank conditionality, [reference] to arrangements with the IMF should not be understood to prejudice or preclude the adoption by the EU of its own view on the structural reforms to be undertaken by the recipient country” (European Parliament, 2004a, §8d). Furthermore, in a Q&A with Marc Otte, former EU special representative to the Middle-East Peace Process (3 December 2010, London), as well as in some of our interviews with officials now working for the EEAS (Interviews with EEAS Officials, 3 & 16 June 2014, telephone), it was admitted that the EU had relied too much on the views of especially the IMF in the second basket. However, none of the persons interviewed for this thesis would go so far as to say that the EU’s approach had been *wrong*: rather it was described as not broad enough and insufficiently supported. This suggests that the core set of beliefs that lay at the basis of the EU’s approach – emphasising liberalisation and private market mechanisms – has retained its significance, with some important evolutions in its scope and operationalisation (see below and the following chapters).

In the light of the above the EU’s efforts to respond to the challenge are instructive. First of all, as the problem of funding became increasingly apparent over the



course of MEDA I, the sum was raised to €5.35 billion in MEDA II – representing a 14% increase (Council Regulation 2698/2000). Obviously this did not fundamentally resolve the deeper financial issues or the lack of FDI in the region, which is why it was also decided to increase lending to the south. This led to the creation of the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP), managed by the European Investment Bank. It was described by the European Parliament as an “effective instrument with limited cost to the general budget of the Community” (2004a, D). The creation of the FEMIP instrument, however, had been a particularly difficult process, symbolising an important locus of tension within the European Union. While, similar to the way in which transition in eastern Europe was financed with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, certain member states and the Commission supported the creation of a full EIB subsidiary for the Mediterranean (including Spain, France, Italy and Portugal), others (Germany, Netherlands, UK) were opposed to this idea because it would require them to allocate more resources to the MENA. The FEMIP, which relied on voluntary contributions from the member states, emerged as a compromise between these camps. It was launched at the Euro-Med conference in Valencia on 22-23 April 2002 (Knio, 2010).<sup>75</sup>

The FEMIP exposed fissures within the European Union, primarily with regards to the question of what the EU’s economic interests were. Initially, the focus of the EMP on FDI sidestepped some of the difficult areas. In response to the shortcomings of

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<sup>75</sup> Special priority was awarded to projects which were seen as contributing to a favourable climate for private investment; e.g. infrastructure, transport and energy, but also healthcare, education and the environment (European Investment Bank, 2005b; 2004). On balance, the financial sector, energy and infrastructure received the most funding in the first years of the programme’s operations, with Turkey, Tunisia and Egypt as the main beneficiaries (European Investment Bank, 2005b, pp 22-23). The overall aim, it was said, was to double the volume of foreign investment in the region (European Investment Bank, 2005c, p. 4).

the first five years of the EMP, there were signs pointing to a mild revision of certain causal beliefs on the basis of what had proven to be in need of support and what was politically feasible, while funding was increased in order to better support reform. But rather than seeking market penetration in a forceful manner by investing in the region, as a sophisticated realist conceptualisation of the EU might expect (e.g. García, 2013), shared economic interests seem to have been quite narrow. As a result, change was more incremental than it could have been had there been strong agreement between the EU member states. Whilst this does not falsify our hypothesis regarding the role of economic interests, it does urge us to place a caveat as there appeared to be a lack of consensus on how exactly EU economic interests were best served. In part the influence of economic interests thus appears as ‘negative’, inhibiting change rather than instigating it. This finding serves as an important addendum to our hypothesis, and it was strongly emphasised by one of our high-level interviewees (Interview with EEAS Official, 3 June 2014, telephone).

Another important example of the dynamic described above could be observed in the sphere of agricultural liberalisation. This had not been a focus area initially, but liberalisation of the EU market – as referred to in the Barcelona Declaration – was expected to have notable ameliorating effects on the incidence of poverty in the Mediterranean (Belhaj Hassine & Kandil, 2009; Tsakiridou et. al., 2009). However, a range of ongoing protectionist practices and market distortions could be identified, and they were most strongly supported by the southern European states whose products competed directly with MENA exports (see EU-MED AGPOL, 2007).<sup>76</sup> This rather

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<sup>76</sup> Generally speaking, protections consisted of market access restrictions (tariffs and tariff rate quotas, entry prices, and seasonal windows applicable to entry prices or tariffs), export subsidies (used to regulate supply on the European market), and domestic support (direct payments to EU farmers, often unrelated to production volume) (Kee et. al. 2009; 2006). It is also notable that the EU’s MFN tariffs on agriculture

exclusivist stance resonates with a 'defensive' realist logic of protecting extant wealth and interests vis-à-vis non-European competitors, suggesting a status quo orientation rather than one of 'imperialism'. In this manner it points towards the significance of material interests, but mostly as a negative 'driver' rather than one instigating action. Perhaps unsurprisingly, in this light, in concluding the Association Agreements a notable source of discord was encountered over the agricultural liberalisation promised by the Barcelona Declaration. There was friction over quotas on olive oil in the case of Tunisia (Euro-Med Partnership, 1998a), while for Morocco the agreement was delayed because of member states' objections to imports of canned sardines, citrus products, cut flowers and potatoes.<sup>77</sup> These tensions and the accordant implications for the AAs were not anomalous: there was an average ratification period of three years, described by the Economic and Social Committee as "almost humiliating for the South" (2002, §4.1.2). This delayed the completion of the FTZ beyond the 2010 goal while the whole procedure was said to be "more lengthy" and "much more difficult than expected" (ibid., §4.1.1 & §2.7).<sup>78</sup> To refer back to Chapter II, this signalled a degree of tension

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have been much higher than their counterparts in manufactured goods, with averages of 18-28% vs. 3% (Emlinger et. al., 2008).

<sup>77</sup> Another important site of debate was that of the fisheries agreements. When, for example, an agreement between the EU and Morocco failed because of the latter's insistence on greater compensation for fishing in its waters, Spanish and Portuguese MEPs argued that aid to Morocco should be cut. The failure to come to an understanding was said to have had "serious economic and social implications for fishermen and the economy as a whole in Portugal and Spain", in response to which the Commission was reminded of its duty, "first and foremost, to EU citizens, whose welfare has, in this particular case, been seriously undermined" (Written Question E1228/01; see also Written Question E2715/01).

<sup>78</sup> Yet even after ratification of the AAs the problem could be said to persist. For example, the agreement with Jordan stated that the parties "shall gradually implement greater liberalisation of their reciprocal trade in agricultural products", but made no clear reference to measurable future changes (Euro-Med Partnership, 2002c, §15). Cut flowers, for example, were subsequently granted a tariff quota of 100 tonnes, which was an increase from the approximately 50 tonnes maintained in the 1990s (see Council Regulation 2604/93). However, under the terms of an exchange of letters between the Community and

between absolute and relative interests in EFP. Both were present in the EMP, but this was not a productive relationship.

To conclude, we have seen how the European Union's actions aligned closely with the causal beliefs that we have identified. Furthermore, as these causal beliefs and the accordant policies were consistent with what has been hypothesised as shared European economic interests, our tracing of EU policy within the second basket allows us to state that our hypothesis has passed the tests we set out to undertake. After all, it would be extremely difficult to make sense of EU behaviour within the second basket without taking into account its economic interests, as represented by the ambition to open up Mediterranean markets for European investment. While it is difficult to find a 'smoking gun' in this instance, we have considered a wide range of evidence and sought to identify patterns and recurring commonalities, which together provide a good hoop test for important elements of our hypothesis.

However, as the second part of this section has shown, the reality of Euro-Med relations has known a variety of complexities that are not easily reflected in abstract theorising. Within the fretting over the FEMIP instrument as well as the EU's reluctance to offer agricultural liberalisation, the significance of economic interests is patently visible. Rather than engendering an assertive foreign policy, however, the evidence suggests a push-and-pull effect between divergent intra-European economic interests. The initially limited focus on FDI within the second basket could be explained

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Jordan tariff preferences were conditional on Jordanian prices not falling below 85% of the Community price level, thus limiting Jordan's competitive advantage (European Community, 2002). For many other products, e.g. garlic, tomatoes, beans, aubergines and oranges, the Union reserved the right to revise tariff quotas if it was found that a product "threatens to cause difficulties on the Community market" (Euro-Med Partnership, 2002c, Protocol 1, §5). These measures were applied to other Med countries as well, and only "mitigated results" could thus be registered as regards agricultural liberalisation (European Commission, 2005a). In terms of agricultural tariff headings there was a relatively low average of 39% (17% MFN) liberalisation on the EU side vs. 9% (4% MFN) in the Mediterranean (ibid.).

from this perspective as it appears to have been a compromise between European member states based on their most strongly shared interest. In this manner we have shed some light on the interlinkage between material interests, causal beliefs and EU policy. Yet we must add the caveat that the influence of material interests has also been of a more ‘negative’ sort, impelling maintenance of elements of the status-quo rather than driving an ‘imperious’ foreign policy. Thus, whilst our hypothesis passes the tests, when discussing ‘European interests’ a degree of sensitivity to internal dynamics and the distinction between relative and absolute gains is in order.

**Table 6: The EMP and Economic Interests**

<b>EU problem definition</b>	Economic problems in MENA, existing trade agreements too limited
<b>Policy Methods and Instruments</b>	Structural adjustment and removal of non-tariff barrier to trade, focus on FDI, EU support for SAPs
<b>Expected outcomes</b>	FTZ by 2010, welfare gains in MENA, increased investment opportunities for EU
<b>Evidence in support of hypothesis</b>	Focus in MEDA, Association Agreements and Structural Adjustment Facilities on FDI, strong congruence between structural adjustment and EU economic interests (hoop test passed)
<b>Challenges</b>	Lack of consensus on how EU economic interests were best served: tension between relative and absolute gains within EU, disconnect between funding and needs of partners, FEMIP/agricultural issues

<b>Actual outcomes</b>	Structural adjustment did not resolve instability, poverty and unemployment, EU investment did not significantly increase
<b>Conclusion</b>	Whilst the EU overestimated the role that the EMP could play in the economic development of the MENA partners, the evidence provides relatively strong support for the hypothesised role of material interests in EU policies towards the south

### ***Decentralised Cooperation, Justice and Home Affairs***

The third and final basket of the Barcelona Process was the ‘partnership in social, cultural and human affairs’. This basket included a remarkably diverse range of issues, including culture, human resources and civil society. There was also attention for issues such as the reduction of migratory pressures, cooperation to prevent terrorism, and fighting against drug trafficking and international crime.

In the current section we investigate the third basket in light of the EU’s causal beliefs and the interests/principled beliefs reflected therein, as necessitated by our hypothesis-testing approach. We find that there were two main areas of action: decentralised cooperation and justice and home affairs (JHA). Our data suggests that for the time period considered in this chapter decentralised cooperation was a relatively insignificant element of the EMP. This leads us to the conclusion that as evidence for wider theoretical claims it provides a relatively weak basis. Thus, no strong argument could be made, as the evidence pertaining to decentralised cooperation and cultural initiatives appears as inconclusive for supporting a particular conceptualisation of EFP. For this reason we point to the necessity to consider further data in our subsequent chapters.

Secondly we consider the EU's actions within the sphere of JHA. Actions within this field were initially limited as well, but a (potential) trend can be identified. It consisted of increasingly restrictive measures, which are placed in this section in the context of the difficulties in the second basket of the EMP and the overall issues within the reformative approach that were experienced. This poses a challenge to our hypothesis as it points to an intervening variable in the form of an exclusivist stance on migration, running contrary to the more extensively discussed European ambition to undercut spillovers of MENA instability by addressing the root causes. However, given the still limited range of EU actions in this field during the period 1995-2003 we are cautious in drawing wider conclusions here, pointing again to the need for further attention for this issue in our subsequent chapters.

### **Decentralised Cooperation, Culture and Mutual Understanding**

Cultural and human cooperation was described in the Barcelona Declaration as “an essential factor in bringing [the participants'] peoples closer, promoting understanding between them and improving their perception of each other” (Euro-Med Partnership, 1995). In this vein it was stressed that culture should be seen as “a source of mutual enrichment” and there was mention of matters such as inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue, the role of the media, and cultural education and exchange (ibid.). These spheres of action belong to the category of decentralised cooperation, where the essential aim could be said to be the reorientation of people's beliefs about ‘the other’ by bringing different groups in contact with one another. It is a good example of the

kind of ‘ground-up’ socialisation that is often highlighted by constructivists (Attinà, 2003).<sup>79</sup>

If decentralised cooperation was indeed a strong locus of action, this might highlight some aspects of EU policy that have until now not been addressed extensively in this thesis. However, the Union’s track record for the first years of the EMP points to a rather serious set of problems in the third basket. In essence decentralised activities in the Barcelona Process marked a continuation of the MED programmes that had been initiated under the RMP. These programmes consisted of a series of actions undertaken in local government (MED-Urbs); migration (Med-Migration); higher education (MED-Campus); media (MED-Media); research (MED-Avicenne); and business (MED-Invest). Between 1992 and 1995 about 470 networks had been funded with a total of €67m (European Commission, 1998c). Yet the programmes became a source of great controversy when a Court of Auditors report identified what it called “serious irregularities and weaknesses in the financial management of implementation” (Court of Auditors, 1996, §4). The chief problem pertained to the Commission’s subcontracting of management and monitoring of the programmes to an organisation called ‘Agency for Trans-Mediterranean Networks’ as well as to a number of Technical Assistance Bureaus (usually consulting firms). Specifically, the Court found that there was no legal basis for the Commission’s delegation of responsibilities to third bodies, that sound financial management within the funded networks was largely absent, and that there had been serious conflicts of interest arising from duplicate roles played by external consultants in both managing and monitoring the programmes. In response to these rather damning findings funds for the MED programmes were frozen “in order to ensure

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<sup>79</sup> One author stresses the “potential of cultural diplomacy and exchanges to increase understanding, shatter stereotypes, and change the way people view each other, which ultimately can lead to changes in the way governments interact” (Schneider, 2009, p. 276; see also Panebianco, 2005).



the transparency and efficiency of the management system”, as the Commission put it in response to questions from irritated MEPs (e.g. Written Question 1015/97).<sup>80</sup>

In addition to these severe bureaucratic difficulties we may mention some more conceptual concerns regarding the effectiveness of the programmes. It must be acknowledged here that it is, in essence, impossible to isolate the independent effects of actions such as student exchanges or local government dialogues, making it difficult to conclusively reach a conclusion. As mentioned by the Court of Auditors (1996, §110), measuring the impacts of the MED programmes was complicated because “the volume of resources devoted to these actions in their respective sectors is limited, and isolating the impact of these measures from other factors affecting them is often not feasible”. In addition, “some of the actions ... have no concrete output”, while others “form part of a long-term process designed to influence trends and change mentalities” (ibid.). However, one of the Court’s findings was that most projects in e.g. MED Urbs were proposed by European bodies, as a result of which they were “better suited to the concerns of northern cities than to the priority needs of those in the south” (ibid., §83). The Committee of the Regions furthermore stated that programmes “often go no further than ‘inter-city diplomacy’” and that no provision was made “for actually implementing the projects devised” (Committee of the Regions, 1998, §3.6). In this light it is clear that altogether a deep crisis existed in the sphere of decentralised cooperation, where activity was paralysed due to mismanagement whilst broader questions regarding the nature of European support were being raised. This makes it highly difficult to evaluate the

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<sup>80</sup> The European Parliament described the state of affairs as follows: “Commission officials contributed to the creation and operation of a system which made proper management of Community funds impossible, which led to additional costs and significant anomalies and consequently discredited and paralysed a major area of Community Mediterranean policy over a number of years” (European Parliament, 1998a, P).

relationship of the third basket to the causal beliefs and independent variables highlighted in our hypothesis, given that little substantive evidence could be found of significant activity (which was frozen) or the deeper rationale.

As a result of this situation, action within the relevant fields of the third basket consisted primarily of workshops, summits and dialogues (see Euro-Med Partnership, 1997, Annex III). More specifically, there had been summits of the Economic and Social Councils (€1.3m MEDA), there was the annual Euro-Mediterranean Civil Forum where civil society organisations from Europe and the MENA could meet and give recommendations to the Euro-Med governments (€2m MEDA), and there were the bilateral cultural activities of the Commission's delegations (€10m MEDA) (European Commission, 2002a). Furthermore, still in the field of culture but not 'decentralised', the Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of Culture had regular meetings, focusing primarily on the broader strategy to be followed in their field. At their meeting in Rhodes in September 1998, for example, the ministers endorsed the so-called 'Stockholm Conclusions' (based on the UNESCO Stockholm Conference of 30 March-2 April 1998) emphasising the interdependence of sustainable development and culture (Euro-Med Partnership, 1998d).

Against this still hamstrung backdrop, after repeated calls for the re-launch of the MED programmes three of them were reinstated in 1998 (European Commission, 1998c). First was Euromed Heritage. It was a continuation of MED Urbs, with the goal of contributing to "increase the capacity of Mediterranean countries to manage and develop their cultural heritage" (European Commission, 2001e, §3) – the allocated budget was initially €17.2m (European Commission, 2002a, p. 68). Second, the Euro-Med Youth programme was founded in 1999 (following MED Campus, with funding of €6m from the MEDA instrument) with the aim of improving "mutual comprehension

and cohesion between young people across the Mediterranean basin” (Euro-Med Partnership, 2006a, p. 15). In practice this encompassed support for training courses, student exchanges, dissemination of information and the organisation of activities like summer camps.<sup>81</sup> Lastly, the audio-visual sector (previously MED Media) was identified as a sphere of potentially fruitful decentralised cooperation. Euromed Audiovisual (€20m MEDA) was initiated in 2000 in this vein so as to e.g. develop media in the southern Mediterranean, promote exchange between European and Mediterranean producers and encourage the distribution of films from Europe and the partner states (ibid.). Altogether these three programmes were the most concrete expression of decentralised cooperation during the period considered in this chapter, amounting to approximately 0.8% of the MEDA I budget for the first phase of the programmes.

Based on the process traced above it is possible to make two key observations. First of all, it is clear that with 0.8% of the MEDA I budget, decentralised cooperation was not a priority area of the EMP. This underscores how it does not reflect the balance of EU policy within the EMP accurately to focus on the third basket at the expense of political and especially economic dynamics. Yet we must distinguish between structural and incidental causes for the observed dearth of initiatives and funding, and in this regard it is clear that the bureaucratic problems experienced in the MED programmes, which paralysed the field of decentralised cooperation, were of an incidental nature. This indicates that as evidence for testing our hypothesis the problems analysed above do not provide the most solid ground. However, as a second point, this does not mean that the processes within the third basket that have been discussed until now are

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<sup>81</sup> In a similar vein the TEMPUS programme for cooperation in higher education was extended to the Mediterranean in 2002.

analytically useless. Despite the problems and complications that we have highlighted, the structural element that can be identified consists of a mild but constant push to include decentralised cooperation in the EMP. The MED programmes scandal did not lead to abandonment of the third basket, and there were some modest achievements such as the endorsement of the Stockholm Conclusions. Thus, decentralised and cultural cooperation formed a relatively minor yet visible part of the EMP. Can this complex balance be accommodated by our hypothesis?

In our view, given the limited range of action undertaken in the period under consideration and the lack of a substantively defined rationale, the evidence is inconclusive for testing our hypothesis. On the one hand there were hints at a degree of instrumentalism in light of the wider modernisation agenda, which could be perceived as providing support for our perspective. For example, references to ‘social flanking measures’ (Euro-Med Partnership, 1999, §2) might be viewed in this manner. On the other hand, the EU also expressed its ambition to mitigate the perception that “the partnership is solely about creating a free-trade area” (Euro-Med Partnership, 2003b, §2.2), which might indicate a more independent role for cultural cooperation. In this vein Michelle Pace has concluded that “what seems to be missing is the connection between [third basket] programmes and activities under the first and second baskets” (2005, p. 65). On this basis it is possible to envision a variety of explanations for the EU’s actions, but it is difficult to find strong evidence to support particular theoretical claims given the fact that the third basket was clearly still a ‘work in progress’. We will therefore return to this topic in Chapter IV to further consider whether it is possible to find supporting or challenging evidence for our hypothesis.

## Of Bridges and Walls

The second core topic covered in the third basket was cooperation on issues pertaining to justice and home affairs. In this light, the theme of the 2003 Euro-Mediterranean civil forum in Naples (28-30 November) was ‘building bridges, not walls’ (Euro-Med Partnership, 2003c). With such a topic one of the forum’s conclusions was striking in its irony (ibid., §17):

*[W]e ask the governments of the EMP to end the current visa policies, and other impediments of free movement, that for many years have systematically complicated EuroMed civil society meetings, including the one in Naples, harassing civil society actors, affecting their dignity or simply impeding them to meet.*

The difficulties experienced by civil society actors attempting to attend the 2003 conference touched upon a wider process in the sphere of migration. The thrust of the Union’s policies here has increasingly been to stop immigration in the short run rather than to provide a long-term solution. In some ways this belied the more progressive or reformative vision of the EMP, and as we will see in this section as well as in Chapter IV it poses some challenges to the sufficiency of our independent variables to explain the EU’s policies.

However, to begin we must note that at the start of the EMP there was no comprehensive common European asylum and migration policy. Each member state had its own policy, regulated somewhat by the Schengen agreement. Generally speaking these bilateral policies converged towards an increasingly restrictive approach (Bade, 2004). Especially important for the Mediterranean were the activities of the southern

member states who had borders with the Maghreb and Mashriq, and by the second half of the 1990s their approaches shared some important common characteristics (Baldwin-Edwards, 2004):

- Required pre-entry authorisation in foreign consulate with guaranteed job (regulated by labour ministry quotas);
- One or two year permits;
- Continuous employment required to renew permits;
- Restriction of many previously held legal rights;
- Aggressive policing and other measures to detect illegal immigrants;
- More secure borders;
- More reliance on readmission agreements with sending and transit countries.

Particularly the latter instrument, the readmission agreements, provided an important tool for the (southern) European countries. The purpose of a readmission agreement is to facilitate the (forcible) return of an illegally present individual (irrespective of their nationality) to a sending or transit country. This can be regulated by formal legal accords as well as private understandings – a relevant example of the ‘formal’ kind is the Spanish-Moroccan provisional agreement of February 1992, while an ‘informal’ example is the French-Algerian exchange of letters for 1984-1994. Since the start of the EMP several of these bilateral agreements were concluded.<sup>82</sup> What is striking is that this kind of deal essentially constitutes an ‘unbalanced reciprocity’ in which the receiving state has no *inherent* interest in taking migrants back in (Cassarino, 2010, p. 34).

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<sup>82</sup> For a complete list of readmission agreements with third states see [<http://www.mirem.eu/datasets/agreements/index>], accessed 6 June 2011.

Consequently the practice of readmission is typically accompanied by a policy of sticks and carrots, and in this regard the workers quotas (e.g. for seasonal labour) played an important role. Sometimes these quotas were used to reward partners, but their usage also included punishment of states found to be uncooperative, which is what Italy did vis-à-vis Morocco in 2001 (see European Commission, 2004c, §1.4). Altogether this *modus operandi* corresponds to the kind of behaviour expected from a realist perspective, in which relative power is mobilised in order to secure zero-sum interests and to uphold the “impermeable external shell” (Rumford, 2006, p. 160) of ‘fortress Europe’ in defence of extant wealth (Driessen, 1996). As said, however, there was not yet a common European policy based upon such parameters.

The Treaty of Amsterdam granted the Community competences in the field of immigration. Before the treaty’s entry into force (1 May 1999) some groundwork was laid with the creation of a High Level Working Group on Asylum and Migration (HLWG) in December 1998, which drafted a number of action plans, including one for Morocco (European Council, 1999a). Rhetorical emphasis was placed on the ‘root causes’ of immigration, but the Morocco action plan’s most distinctive tangible recommendations were to promote “measures aimed at assuring the effective implementation of existing readmission agreements” and to encourage “EU/EC cooperation with Morocco to deal with the return of Moroccan nationals who have entered the territory of the European Union illegally” (ibid., p. 15 & 19). It can be said that this focus on return reflected a consensus amongst the key European institutions.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> The evidence for this statement is as follows. In 1998 the European Parliament argued for the negotiation of “specific measures for the readmission and integration of illegal immigrants who have been refused the right of entry” (European Parliament, 1998b, §7). A special meeting of the European Council in Tampere emphasised the inclusion of “readmission agreements or ... standard clauses in other agreements between the European Community and relevant third countries or groups of countries” (European Council, 1999b, §27). In a subsequent Communication the Commission also highlighted

This appears as somewhat of a deviation from the ambition to address the root causes of migratory pressures by relieving economic problems, which was the chief route of the ‘modernisation’ causal beliefs. Thus, whilst the concern with immigration was nothing new, a significantly reactive European stance would signal a more ‘defensive’ policy than what is suggested by our hypothesis.

On the basis of the abovementioned processes the notion of readmission came to play a role of sorts in the Barcelona Process. Building on the Barcelona Declaration’s mentioning of the partner states’ ‘responsibility for readmission’, the topic was included in the Association Agreements that were drawn up after the Amsterdam Treaty.<sup>84</sup> Justice and home affairs was also explicitly put forward in the Council’s Common Strategy of 2000 (see European Council, 2000, §22). In the case of Morocco, whose AA did not contain the post-Amsterdam readmission clauses, the Council authorised the Commission to negotiate an agreement in September 2000. Morocco, however, objected to an approach which it thought “was still excessively dominated by the security aspect” instead of long-term socio-economic factors such as those mentioned in the Common Strategy (High Level Working Group on Asylum and Migration, 2000, §20). Indeed, it was said that, despite the mentioning of measures such as “reducing migratory pressure ... by improving living conditions, creating jobs and developing training” (Euro-Med Partnership, 2000b, §71.1(a)), the stance of the EU had the effect of making third countries “feel that they are the target of unilateral policy by the Union focusing on

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readmission agreements, identifying them as “the most valuable instrument” to facilitate return (European Commission, 2000f, §2.4; see also Schieffer, 2003).

<sup>84</sup> In the case of e.g. Lebanon it said that the country “agrees to readmit any of its nationals illegally present on the territory of a Member State, upon request by the latter and without further formalities once such persons have been positively identified as such” (Euro-Med Partnership, 2006b, §68.1(b)). Additionally, it was stated that there would be further negotiations on the conclusion of bilateral agreements including the option of “the readmission of third country nationals” (ibid., §69.1).



repressive action” (High Level Working Group on Asylum and Migration, 2000, §53). Public opinion in the south viewed with scepticism a Europe that was “always giving lessons about openness, democracy and human rights” but was now “‘slamming’ the doors in the face of the poor [and] imposing European will on a small and weak country” (El Arbi, 2003, p. 385).

The above critiques resonate with the (realist) idea that the unification of Europe would only draw a new dividing line between another ‘us’ and ‘them’ (Costalli, 2009). But how do the observed dynamics bear upon our hypothesis? The EU had posited earlier that the best way to achieve its goals in the MENA lay with the promotion of domestic change in the partner states and with economic integration with Europe. Given that this was a long-term roadmap, with only limited results in the first five years, the strengthened JHA agenda could be considered as somewhat deviating from the thrust of the EMP. In turn, this suggests that a ‘learning process’ that promoted short-term concerns to the fore might have been present. Yet given that common policy on JHA was still in its infancy, the fact that we can observe some movement in this direction does not in itself provide strong evidence to make wider claims. Thus, it is important to consider the relevance and weight of JHA activities relative to other policies under the EMP in order to be able to adjudge their significance vis-à-vis our hypothesis.

In this vein it can be observed that the events of 9/11 had a reinforcing effect on exclusionary practices in the field of migration. Though it is true that, in the words of Richard Youngs, “refinement rather than rupture was the maxim guiding European reaction to 9/11” (2006a, p. 222; see also Gillespie, 2003), it is possible to identify certain impacts on the third basket after the 2001 terror attacks. An extraordinary EU Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting on 20 September 2001 focused exclusively on anti-terrorism measures (for more on this see Chapter IV), highlighting Europe’s

external borders as one of four important areas of cooperation (European Council, 2001).<sup>85</sup> Further underlining the EU's increasing prioritisation of migration were factors such as the creation of a specific budget line (B7-667) to support action in countries of origin and transit, the creation of the ARGO programme for administrative cooperation on migration, and the emphasis on migration-based conditionality by the Seville European Council. As was stated: "Insufficient cooperation by a country could hamper the establishment of closer relations between that country and the Union" (European Council, 2002a, §35; this view was echoed by the European Commission, 2002f).

For Euro-Med relations the increasing emphasis on migration contributed the creation of a separate JHA basket for the EMP at the April 2002 Valencia ministerial meeting, following preparations by senior officials since the Marseille Conference of November 2000 (Bicchi, 2006, pp. 297-298). It would be focused on "combating drugs, organised crime and terrorism" and "cooperation in the treatment of issues relating to ... migrants, migration and movements of persons" (Euro-Med Partnership, 2002, §5). This could be regarded as the culmination of a process wherein issues pertaining to JHA attracted increasing attention in EFP. Significantly, the tenor of these policies was one of primarily repressive rather than fundamentally reformative measures, somewhat in contrast to the earlier causal belief in MENA reform as the best way to resolve the problems. As the Economic and Social Committee remarked: "clearly, the EU is interested in securing its external borders" (2003, §3.2). Altogether this hints at the possibility that that a revision of sorts took place with respect to the EU's causal beliefs, with additional focus being placed on short-term measures to fill the gaps left by the difficult process of reform in the MENA. In this vein it could be envisioned that the

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<sup>85</sup> The Council (2001) called for, *inter alia*, a strengthening of controls at borders (§24); "more systematic checking of identity papers" (§25); and "maximum rigour" in the implementation of visa policies (§26).

disappointing results of the EMP in terms of stabilising the MENA created what could be called a short-term side track to deal with the more immediate issues in the field of JHA. It should be stressed here that we must be cautious in interpreting causal beliefs from policies in an *ex post facto* manner (given that this makes it difficult to falsify the relevant elements of our hypothesis). Also, due to the relative novelty of the policies considered many of the changes took place on an intra-European or declaratory level, without significant implementation in the reality of Euro-Med relations other than through the revised AAs. Therefore, it can be said at this point that developments in what was now the fourth basket pointed to a development that potentially challenges certain elements of our hypothesis, appearing more short-term and repressive than what is suggested by our independent variables, but as this dynamic had not yet fully taken shape we will return to the topic of JHA in Chapter IV.

To conclude the current section it is useful to reiterate our two main findings with respect to the third basket of the EMP. Firstly, due to the problems encountered within the field of decentralised/cultural cooperation, it is difficult to point to overbearing trends in support of a particular theoretical perspective. Consequently we have argued that in relation to our hypothesis the evidence has been indecisive and that further evidence is required to say more about how the relevant field of action bears upon our conceptualisation of EFP. Secondly, actions undertaken within the sphere of JHA evince a somewhat clearer but not yet decisive direction. From our theoretical perspective this development could be explained in terms of refinement of causal beliefs in light of disappointing outcomes. Significantly, it has been more difficult to connect this move to our independent variables, but we have emphasised that more evidence is needed to solidify our analysis. The Union's agenda on particularly immigration might give rise to a realist argumentation on the basis of a 'fortress Europe' understanding of

EFP, but on balance the EU's actions until 2003 have not been strong or extensive enough to support such an interpretation conclusively. The EU's policies in the third and fourth baskets thus do not legitimate far-going conclusions, serving primarily as pointers for the following chapters.

**Table 7: Human Affairs and JHA**

	<b>Human Affairs</b>	<b>JHA</b>
<b>EU problem definition</b>	Ambiguous, suggestion of cultural distance between peoples	Migratory pressure on EU, terrorist threats
<b>Policy Methods and Instruments</b>	MED Programmes, workshops, summits and dialogue	Euro-Med agreements, JHA basket, ARGO programme
<b>Expected outcomes</b>	Ambiguous	Cooperation from MENA states on JHA leading to stronger EU capability to deal with migration and security issues
<b>Evidence in support of hypothesis</b>	Inconclusive	Inconclusive, potentially challenges sufficiency independent variables
<b>Challenges</b>	Bureaucratic problems, insignificant funding/status within EMP	Common policy relatively novel in this field
<b>Actual outcomes</b>	Ambiguous	No clear results observed

<b>Conclusion</b>	Results inconclusive for hypothesis	Evidence suggests potential shift in EU causal beliefs, but evidential basis needs to be broadened
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## ***Conclusion***

In this chapter we have made an effort to answer the first three questions/tests that were outlined to analyse our hypothesis. This was done on the basis of evidence pertaining chiefly to the 1995-2003 period, encapsulating the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the EU's policies undertaken in its context. Before we proceed with our analysis in the next chapter it is useful to reiterate our main findings and to begin to address the fourth question that was posited to test our hypothesis. In this light we will also be able to discuss some of the advantages and challenges experienced in our analysis vis-à-vis the existing literature.

To begin, we have assessed the nature of the EU's causal beliefs with regards to the Mediterranean region. Since our hypothesis posits that such beliefs serve as a roadmap for foreign policy it was important to gain an understanding of them and to test whether this roadmap was indeed reflected in Europe's collective policies. Based on our consideration of a broad range of evidence from the years immediately preceding the EMP, it has become evident that two core ideas emerged in European thinking on the MENA. First was the causal belief that persistent social and economic problems in the south would have detrimental effects on Europe, which meant that certain Mediterranean problems came to be seen as (partially) European problems too. In concert with this view, the second causal belief that we have identified prescribed what measures needed to be taken to improve the situation of the MENA states. The solution that was suggested was rooted in the prevalent politico-economic theories and processes

underpinning the structural adjustment processes under way in many of the southern states, with some attention for political (democratic) reform. Evidence in support of this reading consists of the manifold statements made by European leaders as well as concrete endorsements of the ‘modernisation’ process put forward by the EU. These beliefs were synthesised in the Barcelona Declaration, which we have regarded as a critical juncture, putting forward a comprehensive vision for future policy based upon an extensive set of causal beliefs.

For our hypothesis to be valid and to pass a (hoop) test, it was important to find support for our causal mechanism (causal beliefs as a roadmap) in the form of convergence between causal beliefs and actions. In this regard we have concluded that particularly in the first two baskets of the EMP it is possible to find strong evidence of behaviour consistent with the identified causal beliefs. The EU followed its programme of privileging economic modernisation, based upon market principles with a heavy emphasis on FDI, whilst paying some attention to political reform. Despite the very broad nature of the EMP, therefore, at its core the programme aligned very closely with the priorities and principles highlighted in the EU’s previously formed causal beliefs. This has provided us with mostly hoop evidence to support our hypothesis, given that it was difficult to pinpoint more decisive smoking gun tests. Another way to put it would be to say that we have been unable to conclusively falsify the notion that causal beliefs provide a roadmap for the EU’s policies, which means that our hypothesis retains its credibility. While some complications were encountered in the third basket’s sphere of decentralised cooperation, extraordinary circumstances (bureaucratic failure) and its ongoing development have led us to consider it as insufficient for building a convincing case either for or against our hypothesis. JHA activities posed a more significant potential challenge in terms of their deviation from the EU’s reformative, integrative

stance, but it is possible to envision this revision as a result of disappointing outcomes and emergent political pressures, which will be further analysed in Chapter IV. In this light it can be said that the ‘causal beliefs as roadmaps’ element of our hypothesis appears as feasible, passing the hoop test.

The third question that we have addressed is whether economic gains and principled beliefs regarding democracy and human rights played a necessary role in the EU’s roadmap/policies. To rephrase this: the issue at stake is whether the observed behaviour could be explained *without* considering either the EU’s economic gains or its principled beliefs. Our findings implicate that this is highly unlikely, for evidence of both independent variables was clearly present across the range of EU actions. Without its principled belief in human rights and democracy, the EU is unlikely to have posited the desirability of democratic reform in the south and to have taken action in that field (as it did in the first basket). And without a shared economic interest, FDI is unlikely to have featured so prominently in the EU’s programme for economic reform. This has led us to assert that hoop evidence exists in support of our hypothesis. This covers a key ambition of our research, which aims to demonstrate how a polarised focus on *either* material interests *or* ideational variables inevitably leaves crucial dynamics unexplained. Investigating their joint input into EU policy via the mechanism of causal beliefs (i.e. expected outcomes) thus provides a nuanced, comprehensive way to account for EU policy. This also proved to be consistent with the data gathered through interviews, as EU officials and other individuals working in the field of Euro-Med relations uniformly agreed upon the idea that economic interests and principled beliefs

both formed indispensable pillars of EU policy within the EMP (Interviews with EEAS Officials, 2, 3, 6 & 16 June 2014, telephone).<sup>86</sup>

The fourth question to be addressed to test our hypothesis is whether the relevant ideas and material interests are jointly sufficient to explain EU policy. This is a somewhat stronger claim than that associated with question three, and given that it builds upon a series of hoop tests we expect to have mainly straw in the wind evidence in its support (in an optimal scenario). Required for this is a more extensive evidential basis than what is presented in this chapter, but let us nevertheless begin to consider the potentialities. Two issues are of key importance: 1) is there evidence of material-ideational interplay; 2) are significant areas of EU policy left *unexplained* by our hypothesis?

To answer 1, it is necessary to find significant covariance between the two independent variables. In some measure this is observed in the fact that EU policy has consisted neither of economic exploitation nor of a more strongly principles-driven approach. Instead a balance appears to have been struck in which both principled beliefs and economic interests were represented. This was enabled by the nature of the EU's causal beliefs: a marriage of the two aforementioned dynamics was envisioned in the EU's roadmap, constituting a win-win scenario not only between the two sides of the Mediterranean but also between ideational and material drivers. We have asked whether this was genuinely believed in or whether it was (as some cynics have suggested) more of a foil, serving merely to mask economic self-interest. To answer this question the changes in response to the problems encountered in the EMP, to be considered in

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<sup>86</sup> However, it must be noted that the importance given to each somewhat differed according to the person interviewed. This serves to underscore both the strengths and weaknesses of personal interviews: they offer the ability to triangulate findings with knowledgeable sources, though with a degree of malleability to personal interpretation.



Chapter IV, will be of particular importance. Thus, hoop evidence of covariance exists, but more data needs to be analysed to be able to make more confident statements in this regard. This also applies to the second point. Our evidence suggests that as hypothesised the major dynamics of EU policies can indeed be explained with reference to ideational-material coexistence. Yet some challenges were encountered in the seemingly fluid nature of material interests as well as the ambiguity and nature of certain aspects of the EMP, particularly its JHA dimension. While none of these challenges were adjudged to speak decisively against our hypothesis, they highlight the need for a broader evidential timeframe as well as a high degree of sensitivity to the complex nature of EU policymaking. Its ability to accommodate these needs will be a crucial determinant for the strength of our approach. For now, it is our judgement that the independent variables highlighted in our hypothesis explain the key dynamics of the EMP for 1995-2003 to a very high degree.

Finally, it is important to consider alternative interpretations and their bearing upon our analysis. Not long before the EMP was initiated, one MENA diplomat was quoted as saying that “we are the biggest remaining market in the world” and that the European states “want to exploit it” (The Independent, 1994). Others spoke in terms of a “new stage of neo-colonial exploitation characterized by unilateral exploitation” (Kienle, 1998, p. 10). This is a rather strong claim, rooted in the belief that the EU sought merely to advance its economic interests. While it is true that we have found important evidence suggesting causal links between shared economic interests and EU policy, a number of caveats were added to attenuate the strength of a pro-active pursuit of European interests abroad. Their upshot is that the breadth of the shared economic interests put forward in our hypothesis as an independent variable is subject to change, more so than appears to be the case for principled beliefs. Of course it is known that any

assumption of 'independence' in social science research relies on a theoretical abstraction, which is why we do not consider this finding to be fatal to our research programme. Yet it does impel a significant degree of sensitivity to the different kinds of EU economic interests to be able to gain a truthful and balanced insight into their role in EFP. In addition, it raises questions over characterisations of the EU as an 'imperial' type of actor (e.g. Amin, 2003).

Conversely, it could be argued that Nicolaïdis and Nicolaïdis' discussion of the EMP as "an idea that, from the bottom-up, [contributes to] creating we-ness" (2004, p. 23), though cautiously formulated, distracts from the very strong role played by economic interests and the more 'defensive' elements in the EU's approach. For scholars who have looked at the EU's normative power or its 'distinctive' approach to IR, the EMP was an important example. As some have argued: "The EU is making an explicit effort to project its own identity of a democratic polity into its relations with third countries" (Börzel & Risse, 2007, p. 19; see also Scheipers & Sicurelli, 2007; Börzel & Risse, 2005). Notably, the third basket has been put forward by scholars focused on the normative side of EFP in support of their views. "There is great appreciation for the inclusion of the cultural dialogue in the Barcelona Declaration", writes Attinà (2003, p. 193), "and great expectations are placed in the initiatives and exchanges promoted in the framework of the third chapter." Adler and Crawford concur, arguing that cultural dialogue has the potential to contribute to shaping shared identities which may "ease negotiations and compromises among conflicting interests, provide a basis for shared interests, and thus create a more solid basis for political stability" (2006, p. 18).

Our findings clearly challenge some of these statements, and we differ with normative approaches on whether ideational variables provide a satisfactory explanation

for EFP. As we have seen, the available evidence corroborates our view as it rather conclusively falsifies the notion that principled beliefs are sufficient to explain EU policy, even in the first basket which has this specific focus. We do not wish to argue against a straw-man argument, so it must be admitted that few authors have argued explicitly that normative dynamics capture the *full reality* of EFP. Yet if this is true it follows that the normative characterisations of the EU that have been put forward in the literature inevitably miss key aspects of EU action and that an exclusive focus on such issues might not be sufficiently justified. Thus, while some authors have explained the EU's apparent timidity in the first basket with reference to its identity-driven belief in 'partnership' (Gillespie & Whitehead, 2002), our approach complicates this reading as it suggests that an explanation might instead be sought in the existence of alternate variables that played a role in shaping the EU's approach. In this manner some of the benefits of our comprehensive approach come forward, as it is suggested that only through an extensive analysis of all the relevant evidence it is possible to explain EU behaviour and policy outcomes within the EMP. We admit that the trade-off lies with the simplicity of our explanatory model, as a more 'eclectic' mode of analysis inevitably follows a broader approach. Through a further testing and refining of our approach we aim to contribute to the literature by allowing for further improvement on this score.

As a last remark it could be said that our analysis of the second basket reveals a sleight of hand in some of the literature. "It is widely admitted", writes Attinà, "that the problems of the economic basket can be solved to a large extent with financial aid and knowledge transfer. Accordingly, the researchers of the socialization/inclusion perspective focus their attention on first [and] third chapter affairs" (2003, p. 10). The problem here is twofold. Firstly, it is not evident that financial aid and knowledge transfer alone would resolve the issues, given that the EMP's market-reliant

‘modernisation’ philosophy seemed at least partially inadequate for promoting a more stable and prosperous MENA region. Secondly, it seems disproportionate to highlight first and third basket aspects of the EMP whilst the EU’s causal beliefs were primed on the second basket. In this regard our theoretical framework, which focuses on the causal mechanism of roadmaps to relay ideational and material variables into foreign policy, has an advantage over alternative approaches in that it is sensitive to the assumptions and areas of focus held by the EU itself. This allows us to seek explanations for EU policy that are in closer alignment with the behaviour observed, thus feeding into a balanced understanding of Euro-Med relations.

## - IV -

# The European Neighbourhood Policy

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In Chapters I and II we have demonstrated how in the wider literature on IR, and Euro-Med relations more specifically, it is possible to identify a binary between approaches that stress ideational (or normative) factors and ones that highlight material drivers, with a more limited number of studies that incorporate both variables. The goal of this thesis is to strengthen and clarify the latter stream by proposing a merger between realist and constructivist theory. This is undertaken by testing the hypothesis that the EU's principled commitment to democracy and human rights and its desire to pursue economic gains coexist as drivers for the EU's policies towards the MENA.

In consideration of a broad range of evidence for the period 1995-2003, Chapter III has demonstrated how our hypothesis passes several tests. We have seen how the EU's economic interest consisted of market expansion and how its causal beliefs pointed towards a regional policy in support of structural adjustment to achieve this goal. This coexisted with a principled belief in democracy and human rights, which was represented in the EU's modest support for existing efforts across the Maghreb and Mashriq. Altogether it was believed that such support, in harmony with economic initiatives, would lead to improvements across the region. In this regard causal beliefs have been shown to be the vital link between principled beliefs and material interests, fusing the different drivers of EFP. This underscores our argument that a limited or polarised perspective inevitably misses key variables to account for EFP.

However, we have also said that more evidence is required to further substantiate our argument and to clarify some of the issues encountered thus far.

Important is the fact that, as we have seen, the EMP did not achieve the gains that were expected. Simply put: there was a gap between expectations and outcomes. The EU's response to this situation is important for this project, given that some of the major problems pertained to our causal mechanism: causal beliefs as roadmaps. Subsequent policy reformulations will therefore be highly important for testing the validity and explanatory usefulness of our approach. What is more, a potential challenge was encountered in the growth of exclusivist JHA measures, for which the connection to our independent variables was more difficult to trace. The contribution of the current chapter is to shed further light on these issues by analysing EU policy from the introduction of the ENP in 2003 until the creation of the UfM in 2008.

We start with an analysis of the ideas and expectations that underpinned the Union's policy (re)formulations in order to answer our first question. Here we highlight change as well as continuity vis-à-vis the Euro-Med Partnership, noting that the context of enlargement and the war in Iraq created a juncture at which there was room for a modest revision of the Union's approach. The evidence considered signifies that the ENP served primarily as a refinement and a rebalancing of extant causal beliefs, which is explained as the result of a learning process after the experience of almost eight years of the EMP as well as EU enlargement.

The chapter proceeds by undertaking our second and third empirical tests for each of the respective policy areas, structured similarly to the EMP's baskets. Evidence is thus considered in order to assess the hypothesis that material and ideational variables were jointly driving EU actions under the ENP. For each of the focus areas considered our hypothesis passes the tests, but we note that some challenges are posed by the continued tension between shared and zero-sum interests (absolute vs. relative) as well as the increasing prominence of security-related initiatives not entirely covered by our

set of independent variables. These challenges, we argue, have some important implications for our hypothesis and the remainder of our investigation.

In the conclusion we address the final question of whether our approach offers a sufficient explanation, as we reflect on our findings and discuss comparative strengths. A number of significant advantages are highlighted, as we indicate how our approach urges more nuance vis-à-vis claims of the EU's 'imperial' nature (Zielonka, 2008; see also Sepos, 2013). Yet we do admit that the significant (self-interested) drive towards economic expansion in the EU's Mediterranean policies cannot be ignored, and this has implications for claims regarding the normative thrust of EFP. A dual perspective thus has some important advantages in allowing analysts to appreciate both dynamics, but we note that several challenges remain. Whilst in our view these challenges do not fatally undermine the hypothesis, they do place certain limits on the extent to which we can claim that our approach offers a sufficient explanation for the EU's Mediterranean policies. In this manner we reach a balanced conclusion, opening the way for our final chapter on the Union for the Mediterranean.

### **From 'Partnership' to 'Neighbourhood'**

This section is concerned with the emergence of the European Neighbourhood Policy over 2003-04, focusing in particular on the ideas and assumptions – that is to say: the causal beliefs – that informed the new approach as well as the synergies and differences with the existing Barcelona Process. We argue that in terms of the underlying causal beliefs the ENP was in large part a continuation of existing policy, but with some refinements. As we will see, these changes were fuelled by the disappointments experienced in the EMP as well as the 2003 war in Iraq and EU enlargement. In aggregate this context enabled a new programme to be iterated, amounting to a situation consistent with our characterisation of a 'critical juncture' with room for renewed ideas

to be put forward. However, whereas the Barcelona Declaration had constituted a comprehensive roadmap for future policy, the documents produced by the EU over 2003-04 were more open-ended and general – with closer elaboration to take place in bilateral Action Plans. The main indication this provides regarding the EU's causal beliefs is that a shift took place from focusing on general modernisation principles and their assumed benefits, as in the EMP, to a more intensive approach with greater sensitivity to context.

Below we trace the key processes related to two respective proposals, enabling us to contextualise the ENP and to pry deeper into the EU's causal beliefs. The first of these proposals was set in motion by the Commission's 'Wider Europe' Communication, introducing the idea of granting the Maghreb and Mashriq partners a 'stake' in the common market. The main conclusion drawn on the basis of our evidence is that the EU was moving towards a slightly more nuanced set of expectations regarding the costs and benefits of economic reform, drawing on the challenges of the EMP's previous approach. Second was the idea of a strategic partnership with the MENA as well as the 2003 European Security Strategy. Their significance rests on the identification of a greater role for political reform in the EU's hierarchy of priorities, thus indicating a further modification to the roadmap of the EMP.

### **Enlargement and 'Wider Europe'**

On 1 May 2004, the European Union experienced its biggest single enlargement to date, adding countries such as Poland, Slovakia, Estonia and Slovenia as well as former Mediterranean partners Cyprus and Malta. This territorial enlargement to 25 member states significantly expanded the EU's external borders and increased its population to more than 450 million people with a combined GDP of almost €10,000 billion (European Commission, 2003c). In anticipation of these developments the Council



stated that enlargement “presents an important opportunity to take forward relations with neighbouring countries based on shared political and economic values”, stressing the need to “avoid new dividing lines in Europe and to promote stability and prosperity within and beyond the new borders of the Union” (European Council, 2002b, §22). In response to the Council’s call for a renewed foreign policy, the Commission suggested that:

*The accession of the new member states will strengthen the Union’s interest in enhancing relations with the new neighbours. Over the coming decade and beyond, the Union’s capacity to provide security, stability and sustainable development to its citizens will no longer be distinguishable from its interest in close cooperation with the neighbours.* (European Commission, 2003c, p. 3)

For the MENA, this perspective did not evince a substantially new vision. After all, the interrelated nature of Europe and the Mediterranean region had long been posited by the major players in EU foreign policymaking (see Chapter III). Though the Commission’s Communication was in principle aimed at all neighbouring states that did not face the prospect of EU accession<sup>87</sup>, the focus was therefore primarily on the new (eastern) neighbours. The reason for this, as the ESC confirmed, was that the eastern countries had hardly been included in EU foreign policy initiatives, in contrast to the MENA (2003, §2.4). Accordingly the Commission spoke of a “new impetus to help realise the objectives of the Barcelona Declaration” (European Commission, 2003d, §3). In light of

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<sup>87</sup> This included Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova as well as Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, and the Palestinian Authority. Russia was dealt with outside of the new framework, Turkey was excluded owing to its EU candidacy, and Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia were added in 2004. Formally, participation in the ENP did not exclude EU candidacy.

the disappointing performance of the EMP, there was a broadly felt need across the EU's institutions for such a stimulus.<sup>88</sup>

What could the 'new impetus' consist of, and what does it tell us about potential changes in the EU's causal beliefs? A significant degree of the *Wider Europe* Communication's focus was placed on the economic dimension, which had also been the EMP's central topic. In this respect, the reforms that were believed to be necessary for the Mediterranean partners would now be promoted via actor-specific offers of concrete benefits and privileges, manifest in a so-called (but undefined) 'stake' in the common market. This has been characterised by analysts as a shift from *regionalism* to *differentiated bilateralism* with benchmarked positive conditionality (Smith, 2008, p. 106; Del Sarto & Schumacher, 2005). Yet it should be noted that what was perhaps the most significant policy tool within the EMP – the Association Agreements – was *already* of a bilateral nature. The main innovation thus consisted of the push to refine the European Union's Mediterranean policy and to take on board some of the tactics of enlargement. In contrast to the EMP's often generic references to the expected benefits

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<sup>88</sup> A significant amount of evidence exists to support this claim. The European Parliament believed that "there should be a relaunch of the current Euro-Mediterranean partnership", adding that the renewed EMP ought to be repositioned "with the wider framework of the Wider Europe – Neighbourhood policy" (2004b, §19). The Economic and Social Committee, for its part, thought that existing agreements should be "utilised to fuller effect" (2003, §3.3). The Committee of the Regions also emphasised the need "to give a new impetus to the Euro-Mediterranean partnership", stressing the link between the countries of the Mediterranean basin and "the future of the enlarged European Union itself" (Committee of the Regions, 2004b, §1). The most important problems within the EMP were later identified by the Commission as: "the partnership has not had any direct effect on the major unresolved conflicts in the region... on the contrary, the persistence of these conflicts has had a negative effect on the process"; "[it] can not be said to have resulted in a significant advance in democratisation"; "insufficient progress has been made in the liberalisation of trade in services and in agricultural products"; "foreign and domestic private investment ... remain relatively low in the partners"; "income per capita ... shows further divergence between the EU and the partners"; "beyond-the-border domestic institutional reforms have been slow" (European Commission, 2005a).

of structural adjustment, in resonance with the enlargement process more faith was now placed in the EU's ability to catalyse economic progress through further market integration. This required both a more active role for the EU and further-going reform by the MENA partners.

After approval by the Council, the Commission's Communication was followed up in July 2003 with a document entitled *Paving the Way for a New Neighbourhood Instrument* (European Commission, 2003f). It stipulated a two-phase approach: until 2006 the Neighbourhood Policy would be introduced while standing commitments would continue to be fulfilled; after 2006 a new instrument (the 'European Neighbourhood Instrument' [ENPI]) would replace the existing MEDA and Tacis instruments. Guidance was to be provided by Action Plans (APs) that would indicate on a country-to-country basis what specific goals and benchmarks were to be applied. As we have said, this suggested an approach that would be more sensitive to context and less reliant on the general principles of IMF-led structural adjustment, which had not produced the benefits that had been expected. Important issues that were mentioned by the Commission included "existing differences in living standards across the Union's borders with its neighbours" and "efficient and secure border management ... to protect our shared borders and to facilitate legitimate trade and passage" (ibid., §6). A notable degree of similarity exists here with some of the concerns listed in the documents that stipulated the rationale for the Barcelona Process (see Chapter III). And similar to the prior idea of 'anchoring', most important in the Commission's plans was the emphasis on market integration. The strategic endgame was summarised by the Committee of the Regions as follows: "a single market, free trade, an open investment system, approximation of legislation and the use of the euro as a reserve and reference currency for trade with the neighbouring countries" (2004a, §2.2). If implemented in full this

would transcend what was envisioned in the Barcelona Declaration, taking the previously formulated idea of anchoring a step further. In our reading this was not necessarily a new way of thinking, but rather a more far-going operationalisation of existing causal beliefs with a potentially more nuanced understanding of the costs and benefits of reform. What this suggests is that a process of collective learning had taken place since the start of the EMP (see Chapter II and Kelley, 2006; Adler, 2002), with as its sources the challenges within the Barcelona Process as well as the successes of enlargement.

After welcoming the Commission's efforts, the Council took some items off the agenda (most importantly the idea of free movement of persons) while limiting the scope for economic integration (European Council, 2003a; 2004c; see also Balfour, 2007).<sup>89</sup> The idea that 'everything but the institutions' would be on the table therefore proved to be incorrect and was overtaken by the idea of a 'ring of friends' (Johansson-Nogués, 2004) – the 'everything but...' idea was described as 'terribly overambitious' by one EU official working on the ENP (Interview with EEAS Official, 2 June 2014, telephone). Overall, the most important suggestion of change to the EU's causal beliefs pertained to the methodology of reform, with some indication that the former reliance on market forces had been at least partially relinquished. As said, from our theoretical perspective this can be attributed to a learning process on the basis of experienced problems and successes. As one interviewee for this study said when asked to comment on the ENP's innovations: "as a young foreign policy actor, the EU has been a learning organisation" (ibid.). Once again this highlights how the EU's foreign policy has been

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<sup>89</sup> For a full overview of the differences between the Council and the Commission see Balfour and Rotta (2005, p. 12).

in continuous development, representative of the Union's search for optimal strategies to attain its various policy objectives in the MENA.

### **Strategic Partnership and the Security Strategy**

Alongside the drawing up of the ENP documents in the context of enlargement, a separate stream of thinking on the future of Euro-Med relations emerged in light of the war in Iraq. As mentioned previously it is possible to conceptualise the dual situation of enlargement and the Iraq war as a critical juncture, enabling the iteration of refined causal beliefs. The Iraq-related stream consisted of the idea to set up a 'strategic partnership' with the Arab world, and the European Security Strategy (ESS). Much like the documents related to the ENP, these initiatives did not evince a fundamentally new way to approach the MENA but rather reformulated certain pre-existing causal beliefs. In this manner they evince modest changes in the EU's approach, reflective of its effort to improve policy whilst retaining several important aspects.

The idea for a strategic partnership was put forward in the shadow of one of the EU's most considerable foreign policy disputes, pertaining to the war in Iraq (see Spyker, 2007). A widely commented-upon and highly mediatised rift erupted between the UK's Tony Blair and France's Jacques Chirac, with Blair reportedly undertaking a 'diplomatic war' against France, while the latter complained that Britain's actions were "not worthy of a country which is both a friend and a European partner" (The Independent, 2003; see also The Times, 2003). The depth of the dispute proved to be a 'cathartic' experience for the Union (Menon, 2004): rather than marking the end of common foreign policy it provided an additional impulse (Hill, 2004). Confirmation of this outlook can be found in comments made by one senior official: "It is not fashionable to say it but the war in Iraq concentrated our minds. It showed that the EU had zero influence if its member states do not pull together" (Financial Times, 2003).

This ‘cathartic’ realisation resembles our definition of a critical juncture (Ikenberry, 1993): in light of major events there was room for new initiatives to be put forward.

In this context it was argued that there was a need to revitalise policy towards the MENA, with some emphasis on Europe’s cooperative approach (as opposed to what was perceived as an imperious American disposition).<sup>90</sup> The Thessaloniki European

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<sup>90</sup> Evidence of the perceived contrast between the US and the EU can be found in some of the latter’s documents on Euro-Mediterranean relations that were drawn up during this period. Stressing the ‘partnership’ dimension, an interim report of March 2004 argued that “in order to be credible” the Union’s relations with the Arab world must be based on a sense of ownership on the part of the Arab states: “reforms cannot be imposed from outside. They must be generated from within” (European Council, 2004a, pp. 4-5). In this instance the notion of ‘partnership’ was at least in part used to distinguish the EU’s approach from what was seen as a more unilateral American disposition, manifest in its ‘Greater Middle East Initiative’. Before the launch of this initiative, a copy of the American plan – which diagnosed a democratic deficit as the core cause of the region’s ills – was leaked to *Al-Hayat*, sparking widespread outrage in the Arab states owing to a perception that the US was scheming to impose a certain political model on the region (The Economist, 2004). As Jordan’s foreign minister said in response to the leak: “Our objective is for this document never to see the light” (cited in Ottaway & Carothers, 2004, p. 5). The European response was lukewarm. It was stated that the Union should proactively “define a complementary but distinct approach” (European Council, 2004a, p. 13). This view was echoed by Chris Patten, who said that the EU should “focus on developing its own strategic partnership with the region”, independent of the United States (Patten, 2004). There was clearly scepticism regarding an American plan that would cover areas in which the EMP had already been active, and the comparative merits of a partnership-based approach were stressed by EU officials: “[I hope] that our friends across the Atlantic are recognising that our long-term, consensus-building approach has some value, based as it is, on building common agendas that respect differences of approach in different countries and regions. The Greater Middle East initiative from the US generated controversy in the region, mainly because the objectives appeared to have been set without any real consultation process with the region” (ibid.). A reformulated version of the American plan was adopted at the G8 meeting of June 2004, where it was termed the ‘Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative’ (BMENA). As far as its strategic focus was concerned the BMENA could be considered a competitor of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. President Bush described it as “a forward strategy of freedom”, and the initiative’s core emphasis was on promoting democracy, improving education, and creating jobs and economic growth (US Department of State, 2004). However, observers described the adoption of the BMENA at the G8 as a rather ‘hollow victory’ for the US, noting that the plan was unlikely to curb anti-Americanism or to improve US-Arab relations (Ottaway, 2004). The EU, for its part, indicated that it would seek “maximum coherence” with the US (European Council, 2004b, p. 16), but – in a reflection of

Council of June 2003 argued that there was an urgent need to strengthen relations with the Arab world, including the promotion of political dialogue, pluralism and democratic reform (European Council, 2003b, §66). The Council thus expressed its desire to strengthen one of the more neglected sides of the EMP: democratic reform. As we have seen, the Union's policy in this field had been subordinate to structural adjustment rather than enacted as a significant priority area in itself. However, questions were increasingly raised regarding the validity of the economic theories that had shaped economic modernisation in the 1990s, and in part this had implications for the pursuit of political reform. We have seen in Chapter III how the MENA provided a good example of some of the challenges experienced, which is why it is not surprising that a process of collective learning in EU thinking vis-à-vis the southern Mediterranean could be seen. The full extent of the shift was not yet clear at this point, but the evidence does indicate the potential for a recalibration of priorities with more independent focus on issues like human rights and democracy.

In December 2003 a draft for a new plan was put forward, entitled *Strengthening the EU's Partnership with the Arab World* (European Commission, 2003h). On the whole, the Union's main priority was described as an intensification of efforts at the promotion of "prosperity, peace and stability, thereby not only contributing to the welfare and security of the region, but also to its own security" (ibid.).<sup>91</sup> It was said that the EU should "encourage, support and facilitate reform in the political, economic and social areas" using existing instruments "in a more focused

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its search for a stronger common foreign policy – systematically continued to stress European independence and the added value of its own particular approach.

<sup>91</sup> The overall idea was restated by Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner, who said that engendering stability abroad was not merely a 'political imperative' (driven by values) but represented a matter of European 'self-interest' (Ferrero-Waldner, 2006a). Europe, she argued, was not an island or a fortress: it must 'export' stability in order to prevent 'importing' instability.

manner [and] streamlining their co-ordination”.<sup>92</sup> In this manner the Union was moved to strengthen its existing philosophy of promoting security by changing the domestic circumstances of the Maghreb and Mashriq states, thus reconfirming the assumptions that had given rise to the EMP. ‘More assertiveness’ and ‘more effective utilisation of extant frameworks’ thus constituted the common theme for the Union’s documents and statements on the Mediterranean throughout 2003-04.

This analysis is underwritten by the contents of the *European Security Strategy* of late 2003.<sup>93</sup> The document said that Europe was “inevitably a global player” (European Commission, 2003e, p. 1) – consequently it should be “more active, more coherent and more capable” in promoting its interests on a global scale (ibid., p. 11).<sup>94</sup> As CFSP High Representative Javier Solana commented, Europe must redouble its efforts “to combat the great ongoing challenges of extreme poverty, hunger and the new pandemics, breaking the cycles of insecurity and tackling bad governance, corruption and disregard of rule of Law” (Solana, 2003). A key feature of Europe’s approach remained a focus on transformational issues such as human rights and democracy (European Commission, 2003e, p. 10). While this was more explicitly linked to European security than had previously been the case, the main causal beliefs in evidence

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<sup>92</sup> The idea of greater attention for political and social reform in the Mediterranean region was not exclusive to the strategic partnership. It had also been asserted in a separate Communication from the Commission in May 2003, entitled *Reinvigorating EU actions on Human Rights and Democratisation with Mediterranean partners* (European Commission, 2003a). This document advised a more proactive European approach, involving the mainstreaming of issues of good governance, human rights and democracy through more effective usage of existing instruments.

<sup>93</sup> The launch of the ESS sparked a lively debate on Europe’s status as a security actor. See e.g. Biscop & Andersson (2008); Merlingen & Ostrauskaite (2006); Posen (2006); Giegerich & Wallace (2004); Shepherd (2003).

<sup>94</sup> As one author observed: after enlargement and the Iraq War it was harder for the EU to “pose as a small huddle of vulnerable do-gooders sheltering under the wing of NATO and the United States” (Bailes, 2008, p. 119).



here are evidently consistent with those underpinning the EMP (see Chapter III). On the basis of the Security Strategy presented by Javier Solana the European Council of December 2003 requested a concrete proposal for its implementation in the Middle East and North Africa (European Council, 2003c, §86). This led to the combination of the notion of a strategic partnership with the stipulations of the European Security Strategy, taking forward the Union's stated ambition of strengthening its policies in the south. Eleven objectives and principles were formulated, including the promotion of a common zone of peace, prosperity and progress, resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the promotion of democracy and human rights, further support for domestic reform, and enhancement of the existing security dialogues (*ibid.*, pp. 10-12). This strategy was reconfirmed in the concluding document on the strategic partnership, approved by the Council in June 2004, stressing once again the need for political, social and economic reform in a spirit of partnership, to be implemented via the ENP (European Council, 2004b).

**Table 8: Causal Beliefs in the ENP**

	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Political</b>
<b>Problem Analysis</b>	Med Markets remain closed; expected gains of EMP did not materialise	Human rights and democracy situation in MENA not improved
<b>Action Needed</b>	Deeper economic reform, market integration	Stronger EU focus; more support for actors in MENA

<b>Operationalisation</b>	Bilateral Action Plans: offer ‘stake’ in common market, support ongoing structural adjustment	Bilateral Action Plans: strengthen existing EU efforts
<b>Anticipated outcomes</b>	Better market access for EU exports, prosperity gains in MENA	Gradually greater adoption of/respect for human rights and democracy principles by MENA regimes, greater stability in region

To summarise this section and to underline its importance in terms of our theoretical framework; we have attempted to gain an understanding of the EU’s evolving causal beliefs on the basis of several important policy documents that were put forward over the course of 2003-04. The significance of this period can be understood with reference to the enlargement of the EU and the war in Iraq, which together created a critical juncture that enabled a reformulation of European policy. This reformulation has been characterised as one of refinement of existing causal beliefs. Given the widely felt failings of the EMP, the evidence suggests that there was a degree of collective learning with regards to the methodology best suited for promoting change in the MENA. In particular, the insistence on the need for domestic reform in the south was retained, but there are hints at a shift in its operationalisation. Thus, the key ‘lesson learned’ was that, rather than trusting in the benefits of dynamics like limited market access, IMF-led structural adjustment and FDI, a broader set of tools was needed to address socio-economic imbalances in the south, with greater attention for political reform.

### ***What Role for Democracy and Human Rights?***

Having gained an appreciation of some of the subtle changes to the causal beliefs evinced in EU collective thinking, we must now test whether there is evidence of these causal beliefs serving as a roadmap for actual foreign policy. In addition we must test whether the empirical evidence supports (or refutes) our hypothesis that principled beliefs and economic interests were necessary variables for the causal beliefs-foreign policy nexus. If smoking gun or hoop evidence can be found to support these claims, our hypothesis will have gained in credibility.

One of the elements that was thought to be in need of stronger efforts during the 2003-04 policy reformulations was the human rights/democracy agenda (European Council, 2003c). What had been the first basket of the EMP had experienced some significant problems, which is why it is vital for testing our hypothesis to gain an understanding of how the EU's policies in this field changed over time.

Under the ENP, it is possible to distinguish two ways in which the EU tried to promote human rights and democracy in the MENA. The first of these can be characterised as government-level or top-down cooperation between the EU and the Maghreb/Mashriq states – described as ‘leverage’ by Lavenex & Schimmelfennig (2011).<sup>95</sup> This approach had not been utilised extensively within the EMP, and one of the Neighbourhood Policy's refinements consisted of stronger inclusion of this dimension in the areas of the first basket. The second EU approach consisted primarily of its ‘bottom-up’ instrument for normative reform in the MENA: the EIDHR (characterised as ‘linkage’ in *ibid.*<sup>96</sup>). Here we focus in particular on the so-called

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<sup>95</sup> As they write, leverage “induces democratic reforms via political conditionality” (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig, 2011, p. 886).

<sup>96</sup> Defined as: “activities that tackle the societal preconditions for democracy and give support to the democratic opposition and other civil society actors in the target countries” (*ibid.*, p. 886).

‘microprojects’ instrument, which serves as a good case-study for determining the particulars of European democracy and human rights promotion. As we will see our hypothesis passes several hoop tests, but throughout this section we also highlight areas where challenges and complications existed.

### **Government-Level Efforts**

A principal way in which the European Union could give substance to its stated ambition of promoting democracy and human rights in the Mediterranean was via direct bi- and multilateral contacts with the states of the Maghreb and the Mashriq. In addition to the traditional tool of declarative diplomacy, some of the key characteristics of the Barcelona Process associated with this route included the ‘essential element’ clauses in the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements (which allowed for suspension of the agreements in case of serious violations of human rights), references made to democracy and human rights in the Council’s MEDA Regulation (opening the option of linkage with financial aid), and discussion of relevant issues at the biannual association council meetings (see Written Question E0601/02). However, as we have seen in the previous chapter these tools were not always fully utilised, with the EU missing a number of opportunities to showcase its commitment to democracy and human rights. On this basis we have said that the hypothesised role of principled beliefs passes a hoop test, but that further evidence must be considered to make more solidly supported claims.

Already in 2000 the Commission had recommended a further prioritisation of democracy and human rights (European Commission, 2000a). This ambition was reflected in the documents that formed the basis for the ENP. Its main policy tool consisted of the ENP Action Plans (they were not binding like the Association Agreements). The first Mediterranean states with whom APs were concluded (approved

through the Euro-Med Association Councils) were Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian Authority.<sup>97</sup> Consistent with the expressed intentions, human rights and democracy were awarded a more defined role in the Union's bilateral plans than what had been the case for the Association Agreements. With slightly different wordings it was said in each Action Plan that "the level of ambition" of bilateral relations would depend on "the degree of commitment to common values as well as the implementation of jointly agreed priorities to mutual benefits" (Euro-Med Partnership, 2008a). However, rather than connecting specific 'rewards' to achievements by the partner states, nothing was said in the Action Plans about benchmarks or benefits to be enjoyed.

Upon a detailed reading of the APs we find that under the header 'democracy and the rule of law' there was mention of the promotion of stable, effective and transparent democratic institutions; enhancement of the independence of the judiciary; support for media freedom; ensuring respect of human rights in line with relevant international agreements; promotion of labour standards; and rights of women (ibid.).<sup>98</sup> A distinction was made between short and medium-term objectives and for each a list of 'actions' was provided.<sup>99</sup> While some argued that the Union's methodology risked

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<sup>97</sup> Following a longer procedure, Lebanon and Egypt agreed to their Action Plans in 2007, while no agreements were signed with Algeria and Syria (the latter's AA was not ratified by the member states).

<sup>98</sup> For an overview of the Action Plans see [[http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/documents\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/documents_en.htm)], accessed 28 November 2011.

<sup>99</sup> In Tunisia's AP, for example, short-term actions to "strengthen institutions guaranteeing democracy and the rule of law" included increasing participation of Tunisian society in political life and developing the role of civil society, while medium-term action included providing support for the Tunisian authorities' efforts at political reform and increasing transparency (Euro-Med Partnership, 2005b, Annex, §2.1). The biggest exception was Israel, where human rights were addressed in a brief section under the header 'shared values' (Euro-Med Partnership, 2005c; see for more on the Israeli Action Plan; Herman, 2006). It may be added that Europe's stance towards Israel was the target of much criticism: "Israel continues to violate the human rights of Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territories and discriminate against the Palestinian Arab minority in Israel, and the EU's operative diplomacy continues

supporting superficial reforms that strengthened incumbent elites (Echague, 2008; Balfour, 2007), this critique focuses on the EU's causal belief in strengthening existing efforts and does not necessarily undermine the idea that there was a commitment to principled beliefs. The more detailed provisions indicate that the focus on democracy and human rights was at least partially strengthened under the ENP. This aligns with our analysis of the causal beliefs expressed in the ENP's founding documents, which suggested a modest rebalancing of the EU's priorities.

Several challenges and limitations must be noted, however. The Action Plans presented a rather unstructured collection of suggestions for reform that did not address deeper political issues (see Kausch, 2008). Measurement of success was difficult and the Action Plans were relatively widely criticised. The general opinion within e.g. the Moroccan NGO community was that the EU-Morocco Action Plan ought to be “reformulated within a logical framework that will highlight better-defined goals as well as the actors, timelines, and financial and human resources needed for each action” (Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network, 2007, p. 6). In interviews and conversations with individuals active in MENA-based civil society organisations, including activists from Tunisia (Interview on 12 July 2011, Berlin), Palestine (Interviews on 22 and 23 October 2010, Bethlehem), and Egypt (Interview on 13 July 2011, Berlin), the desire for a clearer and more forceful EU policy was also frequently expressed.

These issues notwithstanding, it is true that an overview of the evolution of funding allocations to some of the Union's key partners points to growth of the budget:

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to accommodate many of Israel's illegal policies ... The EU can not knowingly allow its contractual relations with any third country to operate in this manner without itself violating EU law and international humanitarian law” (Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network, 2005, pp. 2-3).

**Table 9: NIP allocations for Governance and Human Rights in Million €<sup>100</sup>**

	2002-2004 (MEDA)	2005-2006 (MEDA)	2007-2010 (ENPI)
<b>Jordan</b>	2 (1.4% of total)	5 (4.5%)	17 (6.5%)
<b>Morocco</b>	n/a	5 (1.8%)	28 (4.3%)
<b>Egypt</b>	n/a	5 (2.1%)	40 (7.2%)
<b>Tunisia</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a

Apart from growing absolutely, the numbers reveal that there was also a relative increase in the budget for reform, though it was still regarded as “relatively modest” by the Commission (2006f, §3.7; see also European Commission, 2007c).<sup>101</sup> If this point to an increase in importance for principled beliefs, complicating matters is the fact that political reform continued to be secondary to economic progress. In the case of Egypt,

<sup>100</sup> Source: National Indicative Programmes, available at: [\[http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/documents\\_en.htm\]](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/documents_en.htm), accessed 29 November 2011.

<sup>101</sup> An additional development within the sphere of the first basket that must be mentioned was the establishment of dedicated working groups on human rights. This had been done for the first time in 2003 under the Union’s cooperation agreement with Bangladesh, and the first Mediterranean state to become involved with such a working group was Morocco in 2006 (Euro-Med Partnership, 2004b; 2006c). The purpose of the working group was to discuss, at least once a year, the implementation of the Association Agreement with regards to the rule of law, good governance and democracy (Euro-Med Partnership, 2006c, Annex §3). Jordan and Tunisia also agreed to the setting up of specialised subcommittees, as did Egypt after its AP was adopted in March 2007, but the practice failed to spread further to other Mediterranean partners. What is more, preparations for this form of deliberative cooperation (the working groups had no decision making powers) were slow and difficult. As the Commission said about the EU-Tunisia Association Agreement in 2006: “Little progress was registered on political issues, as evidenced by slow preparations for a subcommittee on human rights and democracy” (European Commission, 2006c). For Jordan, after the subcommittee’s establishment it was said in a more positive tone that it provided a forum “to discuss sensitive issues such as the death penalty and women’s rights”, adding that “the mere fact that a dialogue on such issues can now take place within an institutional framework is a progress brought about by the ENP” (European Commission, 2006d). It is difficult, however, to reliably assess this upbeat claim, as the proceedings of the subcommittees were considered confidential and it was not allowed to refer to them in public (e.g. in the European Parliament).

for example, political reform was not included as a priority in the 2002-04 Indicative Programme – the focus was instead on economic reform. Promoting human rights and democracy was similarly only a sub-category of ‘supporting sustainable socio-economic development’ in the 2005-06 NIP. And in the 2007-2010 financial planning it was said that “the democratisation process will contribute to strengthening [Egypt’s] economic development” (Euro-Med Partnership, 2006f, p. 20).

How do these findings bear upon our hypothesis? First of all, it is possible to say that the impact of the Union’s refined causal beliefs, which now suggested that greater attention needed to be paid to political reform without waiting for the expected benefits of structural adjustment, is supported by hoop evidence from our empirical data. The main indicators in this respect are the ENP’s more precise agreements and programmes with regards to democracy and human rights as well as the gradually increasing budget in this field. With a view to the causal beliefs undergirding these dynamics, it is evident that the EU’s principled beliefs could not be ignored as a principal variable. That is to say: there is hoop evidence to support the claim that principled beliefs constitute a *necessary* variable.

However, in addition to what has been said above, several complications within the relevant sphere must be taken into account. First, e.g. in the case of Tunisia the difficulties that were encountered actually led to a partial termination of political reform programmes (see European Commission, 2006e). The 2007-2010 NIP tellingly stated that because of “serious difficulties in implementing third-generation MEDA projects ... the Commission takes the view that efforts ... should focus on good economic governance” (European Commission, 2006i, p. iv). Rather than following the Commission’s own advice that “negative measures may ... be more appropriate” when a “third country [has] no genuine commitment to pursue change through dialogue and



consultation” (European Commission, 2001b, §3.1), there was a shift towards less controversial areas of cooperation. Second, in awarding Morocco funds from the ‘Governance Facility’ that had been set up to support reform (Euro-Med Partnership, 2005d) little correlation could be detected between achievements and funding, as Morocco did not evince greatly advanced status (see European Commission, 2007d, p. 17).<sup>102</sup> Finally, when Hamas won the Palestinian elections, the EU suspended implementation of the ENP Action Plan and froze aid to the Palestinian Authority.<sup>103</sup> This had adverse repercussions, both politically and on a socio-economic level, whilst sending a negative signal to the wider region (see Pace, 2007). It was felt that the European Union had betrayed its commitment to democracy by undermining significant steps towards a properly functioning democratic order in a priority area of institution building (Interviews with Commission Officials, 18-23 October 2010, East Jerusalem). This stood in contrast to the EU’s positive response to the Moroccan parliamentary election of 2007, despite a 37% voter turnout and suspicions of gerrymandering (Kausch, 2009; Hamzawy, 2007).

Similar to the lack of smoking gun evidence of a commitment to democracy and human rights within the EU’s enactment of the EMP, these findings appear as a challenge to the assertion that principled beliefs provide *the best* explanation of EU foreign policy. Yet they do not allow us to say that democracy and human rights were irrelevant altogether. Given the EU’s causal belief that reform was best promoted with, rather than against, incumbent regimes, and the possibility to note convergence between

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<sup>102</sup> From the eastern partners, Ukraine received funding. The funds were used by Morocco to support ongoing public administration reform programmes, while Ukraine invested in reform of its energy sector (European Commission, 2007a).

<sup>103</sup> A temporary mechanism (TIM) was put in place to circumvent Hamas, followed by PEGASE in 2008 (Musu, 2010, p. 131).

these causal beliefs and the policies discussed in this section, principled beliefs do appear as indispensable for explaining significant elements of the ENP. Thus, on the basis of the above we can say that principled beliefs were *necessary*, but certainly *not sufficient* for explaining the EU's actions. This analysis can be further strengthened with reference to the Union's actions within the EIDHR.

### **The EIDHR and Microprojects**

In the Commission's Communication on human rights and democracy in the Mediterranean of early 2003, a number of recommendations were made. Perhaps most importantly, it was suggested to revise the EIDHR's strategy and to pay greater attention to the complementarity between EIDHR and MEDA programmes (European Commission, 2003a). Within the design of the ENP, the EIDHR was regarded as part of the existing institutional infrastructure, and it was stated that its programming would be "consistent with the [Action Plans'] policy goals while supporting civil society in areas such as democracy, rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms" (European Commission, 2004a, p. 25). Thus, until 2007 (when the ENPI became operational) no significant changes were made to the EIDHR. The exception was the programme's widening in 2004, after criticism on its initially limited scope, to include all Mediterranean partner states (see Written Question E2673; European Commission, 2004b). Additionally, the financial resources that became available after the accession of the new EU member states opened the door for a larger budget allocation after 2003:

**Table 10: EIDHR Allocated Budget, €Million<sup>104</sup>**

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
100	101	125	128	122	130	137	142

The steady growth of the budget indicates how the programme grew in scope and importance over the years, correspondent to the intention to strengthen this dimension of EFP in the Neighbourhood Policy. A variety of actions could be supported under the EIDHR programme<sup>105</sup>; but most characteristic were the microprojects (managed by the Commission's Delegations). According to Federica Bicchì they were “the type of action that can best exemplify the EU's approach to democracy assistance” (2009, p. 67). This is so because, in the terms of our theoretical framework, they best showcase the EU's causal belief in the importance of working with existing groups and initiatives without taking too aggressive an approach against incumbent regimes. For this reason the microprojects serve as a representative testing ground for our hypothesis.

Microprojects were defined by the Commission as “projects under a given campaign with a support volume between €10,000 and €100,000, exclusively for local civil society-based applicants within a country eligible under the campaign” (European Commission, 2004b, p. 29).<sup>106</sup> As regards the budget, for 2002 the microprojects made up 14% of the total EIDHR budget (European Commission, 2001f, p. 14); for 2005-06 this had increased to 31.1% (€60m, see European Commission, 2004b, p. 32). For the

<sup>104</sup> Source: Iľákov, 2008, p. 16.

<sup>105</sup> These included ‘targeted projects’ (initiated by the EU, focused on e.g. the ICC) and ‘macroprojects’ (on the basis of a call for proposals, mostly aimed at large NGOs and human rights organisations). Another key element of the EIDHR consisted of the Election Observation Missions. The combination of proactive and responsive methods was explained as the best way to preserve local ownership while preventing becoming a ‘hostage of fortune’ (European Commission, 2001f, pp. 11-12).

<sup>106</sup> The maximum amount was later raised to €300,000.

Mediterranean partners this materialised in the following allocations (on average 19% of the total microprojects budget was allocated to the Med region):

**Table 11: Microprojects Budgets in € 2001-2006<sup>107</sup>**

	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>Algeria</b>	-	500,000	500,000	435,000	840,000	765,000
<b>Egypt</b>	-	-	-	1,000,000	970,000	1,115,000
<b>PA</b>	500,000	-	500,000	435,000	1,235,000	1,118,000
<b>Jordan</b>	-	-	-	680,000	875,000	765,000
<b>Israel</b>	450,000	-	500,000	435,000	855,000	615,000
<b>Lebanon</b>	-	-	-	500,000	545,000	280,000
<b>Morocco</b>	-	-	-	1,000,000	1,025,000	950,000
<b>Syria</b>	-	-	-	500,000	-	-
<b>Tunisia</b>	-	250,000	-	215,000	-	175,000

These numbers indicate that, despite relatively significant budgets for e.g. Egypt and Morocco, there were also various gaps and an elongated start-up period. What is more, between 2001 and 2007 only 24 calls for proposals went out via the Council's Delegations in the nine Mediterranean partner states (Bicchi, 2009, p. 68); until 2005 calls for proposals were launched only in Palestine and Algeria. This means that the above allocations do not accurately reflect the actual funds that were spent, and for 2005 and 2006 the numbers include the reallocation of previously unused funds. The Delegation in Tunisia did not launch a call for proposals at all; in Syria and Algeria

<sup>107</sup> Source: European Commission, 2004b, pp. 34-35 & European Commission, 2007b, p. 17.

none of the selected projects were concluded<sup>108</sup>; and in most cases the Delegations underplayed potentially more controversial aspects of the EIDHR in their calls for proposals (ibid.).<sup>109</sup> In addition, a persistent problem noted by observers was the “unduly overly rigid” complexity of the application procedure (Economic and Social Committee, 2009, §3.4), which made it extremely difficult for relatively inexperienced organisations to apply and which enhanced a so-called ‘donor darlings’ effect (Ihák, 2008, p. 12). Finally, the projects that *did* receive funding typically focused either on narrow human rights issues with limited political impact or on more generic discursive/training activities. Whilst more limited initiatives should of course not be dismissed, it is also true that they, in the words of one human rights organisation, “can only be effective if they are deployed alongside, not instead of, concrete efforts to ensure respect for human rights and good administration of justice throughout the EUROMED countries” (Amnesty International, 2005, p. 3).<sup>110</sup>

With respect to our hypothesis, the microprojects serve as useful hoop evidence in support of the necessary role played by principled beliefs. They demonstrate how a principled belief in human rights and democracy existed and how the EU’s causal belief

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<sup>108</sup> Indicative of the difficult situation in Algeria was the country’s earlier refusal to issue visas to an EIDHR technical committee in 2002 (see Written Question E0881/02).

<sup>109</sup> In one of Jordan’s calls for proposals, for example, the aims for Campaign 3 included: “raising awareness of citizens regarding their rights to participate in the political life”; “increas[ing] the dialogue among executive and legislature institutions as well as civil society organisations”; “establishing networks of civil society organisations”; and “fostering the development of independent media” (European Commission, 2006g, pp. 5-6). Evidently this left somewhat underdeveloped the also included aim of developing electoral democratic processes. See the Commission’s webpage for a full overview of the calls for proposals: [[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/funding/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/funding/index_en.htm)], accessed 9 December 2011.

<sup>110</sup> In this vein, one review concluded that e.g. justice reform funding was aimed mostly at general advocacy while failing to ensure “that justice is actually done on the ground” (DG for External Policies of the Union, 2005, p. 16).

in small-scale cooperation with existing initiatives was operationalised. Yet the programme was obviously far from perfect. In a detailed study of the microprojects' implementation process, Bicchi (2010) attributes the problems that were experienced to the 'interpretive space' that existed at various levels: there was "no overarching rationality to coordinate and direct the implementers of the policy" (p. 992). Where does this leave our analysis?

To begin, it is clear that issues within the first basket of the EMP did not rise to prime importance in the ENP. It is true that more attention was paid to the political dimension and that, owing to the earlier problems of the first basket, the EU's causal beliefs now prescribed a greater focus on democracy and human rights. In this regard, and in light of the modest evolutions observed, there is relatively strong hoop evidence for the hypothesised relationship between principled beliefs, causal beliefs and EU behaviour. Principled beliefs continued to provide input into EU foreign policymaking whilst causal beliefs were refined in response to a changing context.

It must be added here that if bureaucratic failure was indeed primarily to blame for the EIDHR's problems, it would be difficult to build a *structural* analysis upon its performance (bureaucratic failure typically being of a more accidental nature). Despite being characteristic of the EU's wider approach, therefore, as evidence to test a hypothesis the EIDHR must be placed within a broader context. In this sense we might reinterpret the openness that had allowed the microprojects' divergent implementation as a result of the wider lack of willingness to act decisively in support of human rights and democracy, as has been demonstrated with respect to government-level efforts. Partially this was a product of the EU's causal beliefs, which prescribed a cautious approach, but the lack of more convincing action implies the possibility of a balancing

act with other drivers. In sum, principled beliefs appear as *necessary*, but it has proven difficult to locate smoking gun evidence in support of stronger claims.

Changes after 2006 confirm this interpretation. It was admitted by the Commission that “the emphasis has been on ‘single issue’ projects” whilst “collective impact or synergies at national level have not been so evident” (2006h, §2.3). However, when in 2006 the scheduled overhaul of the instruments for EU foreign policy took place, the Commission’s initial plan was to incorporate the EIDHR as a thematic heading in the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) (see Youngs, 2006b, pp. 69-70). This move would have relinquished the EIDHR’s autonomy vis-à-vis other EU development actions, but owing to pressure mainly from the European Parliament and civil society it was ultimately decided to create a dedicated regulation for human rights and democracy: the ‘European *Instrument* for Democracy and Human Rights’ (‘EIDHR II’).<sup>111</sup> The aim of the new EIDHR was to achieve a ‘radical’ simplification of European external assistance and to answer in this way to some of the criticisms levelled at earlier efforts. Significantly, it was now possible for individuals to apply for funding, thus opening the way for more ‘political’ support. What is more, an operational distinction was made between countries in ‘transformation’ – where existing efforts could be built upon – and ‘authoritarian’ ones – with little extant political liberalisation (e.g. Libya, Tunisia and Syria) (European Commission, 2007d). Specifically devoted to the ENPI and the Middle East was €77.3m (ibid.), but it could be said that the resources were spread relatively wide and thin – both geographically and thematically (Human Rights and Democracy Network, 2009; Herrero, 2009).<sup>112</sup> However, once again the programme

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<sup>111</sup> See: Regulation 1889/2006 of the European Parliament and the Council.

<sup>112</sup> For EIDHR II the microprojects were renamed as the ‘country-based support scheme’, active under objective 2 with a total budget of €161m (3% of which could now be spent on promotional activities by the Commission’s Delegations).

was slow to take off, coming underway only in the second half of 2008 (European Commission, 2010g, p. 4). Through 2010, 116 projects were undertaken in the MENA. An overview of the projects that have received funding indicates that the focus has continued to be on issues such as training, networking and awareness-raising, not dissimilar to the previous EIDHR (see EIDHR, 2011).<sup>113</sup> This indicates that despite the consistent role of principled beliefs and the gradually evolving nature of EU causal beliefs, the parameters within which policy revisions took place were not so wide as to allow for a more comprehensive overhaul. Our hypothesis suggests that this might have been due to the influence of material variables, which determined the range of possibilities for EFP. This will be further tested in the next section.

**Table 12: The First Basket under the ENP**

<b>EU problem definition</b>	Lack of effective/transparent democratic institutions, insufficient degree of respect for human rights principles in accordance with relevant international standards → suggests importance principled beliefs
<b>Policy Methods and Instruments</b>	Stronger action required, support best given to existing efforts rather than explicitly against incumbent regimes, bottom-up focus
<b>Expected outcomes</b>	Greater alignment with international agreements but few additional measurable benchmarks given

<sup>113</sup> An additional focus has been the protection of human rights defenders (with 22 projects undertaken to this purpose), for example through emergency legal and financial assistance (see EIDHR, 2011, p. 159).



<b>Evidence in support of hypothesis</b>	Action plan prioritisation, more independence from economic side of Euro-Med relations, increased financial aid, microprojects (hoop test passed)
<b>Challenges</b>	No benchmarks in Action Plans, unstructured approach, lack of will to address problematic cases (smoking gun test failed)
<b>Actual outcomes</b>	Ambiguous - no clear normative effects or material impacts observed
<b>Conclusion</b>	Hoop evidence to support necessary role of principled beliefs, but challenges imply that other variables were involved

In sum, the evidence appears to support our claim that a process of collective learning took place, with gradual refinement of the EU's operationalisation of its first basket agenda. Human rights and democracy emerged as a moderately more significant field of action, indicating that the EU was acting in line with its partial relinquishment of the rather limited focus on economic reform in the early years of the EMP. But this does not mean that the first basket overtook economics, which was still a more significant area of focus. What is more, across the EU's range of actions it has been difficult to find a true smoking gun to support a normative conceptualisation of EFP. The evidence that we have considered has been increasingly complex, with a number of ambiguities and challenges. That said, we do feel confident in asserting that there is broad support for the claim that principled beliefs played a necessary role as drivers of the EU's policies. It is true that this is a relatively weak claim still. For this reason we will continue our analysis in the following section with a focus on the economic side of the ENP, which has been hypothesised as coexisting with principled beliefs in driving the EU's Mediterranean policies.

## **The ENP's Economics and Trade Dimension**

In Chapter III we have seen how the EMP was expected to improve socio-economic conditions in the south whilst opening up new markets for European investment. The most significant benchmark that was set was the conclusion of a free trade zone by 2010. When the ENP was being drawn up and implemented, however, little had come of this vision. As one report stated: “reality lags far behind the aims ... the 2010 project that underpins the whole process is at risk” (EuroMeSCo, 2005, pp. 7-8). What is more, the expected benefits in terms of regional prosperity did not emerge. According to Josep Borrell, then president of the European Parliament, the Mediterranean Sea remained “the most unequal border in the world” (Borrell, 2005).

In our investigation of the EU's evolving causal beliefs we have argued that a refinement of sorts took place. The roadmap for policy implied by the reformulated set of beliefs aspired to the same goals as the EMP but contained an updated operational element, inspired by various successes and failures across EFP and changing ideas on how to promote prosperity abroad. The EU promised more support for economic adjustment, but it also required deeper-going reform in order to allow the MENA partners to benefit from the ‘stake’ in the common market that would be on offer. In the present section we investigate these two core dimensions of what had been the second basket of the EMP. We begin by asking to what extent the reformulated causal beliefs were reflected in concrete policy initiatives pertaining to supporting reform in the MENA, enabling us to test the extent to which the identified causal beliefs provided a roadmap for EU foreign policy. We then proceed by tracing processes related to market integration between north and south, which allows us to explore some of the more detailed applications of EU causal beliefs and to test whether our independent variables played a role in this process. We argue that relatively strong evidence can be found in

support of our hypothesis on both counts, but in light of our data we also reiterate some of the additional remarks made in Chapter III regarding the tension between shared and relative (zero-sum) interests within the European Union's foreign policy.

### **European Financial Support under the ENPI**

From the perspective of this thesis' theoretical framework, one aspect that is remarkable about the ENP is the way in which it reflected a refinement of causal beliefs amongst European policymakers. The causal logic of the ENP was partially based on the process of enlargement and the failure of the EMP, implying a process of collective learning within the EU. In this light it is notable that one explanation for the success of enlargement can be found in the support given for reform, such as through the Union's Structural and Cohesion Funds (up to 2.4% of their GDP) (Martín, 2006). Previously there had been criticism of the disjuncture observed between the costs of reform and the amounts of aid provided by the EU within the EMP (see Chapter III), which is why this topic provides a useful avenue to explore the extent to which refined causal beliefs provided a roadmap for the EU's Mediterranean policies.

A variety of instruments was envisaged under the ENP to provide support for the eastern partners, the Maghreb, and the Mashriq. The option of access to the Structural Funds was not on the table, so the most important financial tool was the successor to MEDA: the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument. In addition to this the 'Technical Assistance and Information Exchange' (TAIEX) and 'Support for Improvement in Governance and Management' (SIGMA) instruments became available to the Mediterranean partners. A system for 'twinning' with EU member states' institutions was also designed. Finally, investment was promoted with the Neighbourhood Investment Facility (set up in 2007), which built upon the earlier established FEMIP (see also Chapter III). As we will see, investigation of these

instruments supports our analysis that the ENP now followed a refined roadmap with a larger role for EU support, marking a slight departure from the EMP's more explicit reliance on market forces.

To start with the ENPI, as stated in Regulation 1638/2006 its goal was to promote “enhanced cooperation and progressive economic integration between the European Union and the partner countries” (§1). The grand total of ENPI funding available for 2007-2013 was set at €1.5 billion. Allocation of these funds would be decided on the basis of the Association Agreements and the ENP Action Plans (73%), with some funds reserved for regional initiatives and cross-border cooperation (European Commission, 2006l). A relatively large share of the budget was awarded to the Mediterranean countries:

**Table 13: 2007-2010 ENPI Support in €million<sup>114</sup>**

<b>Med countries</b>		<b>Eastern Partners</b>	
Algeria	220	Armenia	98.4
Egypt	558	Azerbaijan	92
Israel	8	Belarus	20
Jordan	265	Georgia	120.4
Lebanon	187	Moldova	209.7
Libya	8	Ukraine	494
Morocco	654	Russia	120
Palestine	632	Regional Programmes	223.5
Syria	130	<i>Sub Total:</i>	<i>1378</i>
Tunisia	300		
Regional Programmes	343.3		
<i>Sub Total:</i>	<i>3305.3</i>	<b>Total</b>	<b>4683.3</b>

Whereas MEDA II had committed a total of €5.350m for 2000-2006 (i.e. an average of €764.3m per year), purely Med-specific funds (regional and bilateral) now amounted to €26.3m annually for 2007-2010 (excluding cross-border cooperation programmes, inter-regional programmes and the governance and investment facilities). On a per capita basis, annual funding for e.g. Morocco increased from €4.80 in MEDA II to €5.45 after 2006 (Bremberg, 2011).

Whilst this represented a useful increase, indicative of a more active EU approach, the total amount was still relatively marginal compared to the significant

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<sup>114</sup> Source: European Commission (2006l).

debts and negative trade balance of most Med countries (see Eurostat, 2011, p. 67).<sup>115</sup> The European Commission admitted the problem as it spoke of a scarcity of resources (2006b). In this regard, funds alone do not provide a significant basis for reaching the conclusion that the EU changed its approach. It seems that this was recognised by the Commission, which stressed the importance of also “seeking synergies between ENPI and other EU funds as well as with Member States and their financing institutions” (European Commission, 2006b). Coordination of this kind was provided for by thematic groups, often led by the local EU Delegations, and through the provision of direct budgetary support to Med partners (European Commission, 2010d, p. 36).<sup>116</sup>

As alluded to above, three instruments can be identified that were explicitly designed to provide additional support for the ENP. It is especially in these instruments that we can find evidence of how the ENP’s roadmap was enacted in EU foreign policy. The first of the three is TAIEX. Available to the ENP countries since 2006 (see Council Decision 2006/62/EC), its key goal has been to aid the approximation, application and enforcement of EU legislation. To this purpose it provides demand-driven, short-term advice (5 days maximum) to partner states through expert missions, workshops and study visits to the EU, with an annual budget of €5m, shared with (potential) candidate countries (European Commission, 2010c, p. 59). The SIGMA programme (€5.9m for

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<sup>115</sup> For Morocco, for example, if we assume a yearly bilateral sum of €163.5m, this works out at 0.27% of GDP in 2008 (using data from Eurostat, 2011, p. 14). For Egypt this stands at 0.12%, and in the case of Tunisia at 0.25% (ibid.); significantly less than the 2.4% for candidate-members.

<sup>116</sup> In 2009 direct budget support made up 38% of the ENPI budget (European Commission, 2010d; see also European Parliament 2010a). Another effort at achieving better coordination was made with the ‘European Consensus on Development’ of 2006 (European Union, 2006). With regards to direct budgetary support we may add that though it could be supportive of national reform programmes (and *ipso facto* promote co-ownership), budgetary support leaves little room for targeted aid and does not easily allow for impact assessment. Consequently there is the risk of strengthening incumbent elites and superficial changes (Harrigan, 2011; Open Europe, 2011, pp. 16-20).

2008-2010, undertaken in cooperation with the OECD) operates under similar conditions, except on a more involved level (assessment and assistance) and over a longer period of time (up to six months). Finally, there has been the option of institutional twinning between one or more member states and an ENP partner. Such a project involves the secondment of an advisor to a beneficiary country for at least 12 months to help with the approximation of the EU *acquis* and structural reform (ibid., p. 58).

Since these three programmes are essentially EU accession tools, they could be considered, in the words of Benita Ferrero-Waldner, as “central in applying the EU’s transformative power” (European Commission, 2008b, p. 1). For the purposes of this thesis, what the above set of instruments indicates is how the EMP’s causal assumptions, i.e. the set of beliefs on how to best stimulate change in the MENA, was concretised in the form of a series of instruments previously utilised in the context of EU enlargement. This provides further evidence in support of our analysis of how the roadmap for EU foreign policy towards the MENA was gradually adapted since 2003. In our interviews with EU officials, it was stressed how the ENP showcases the EU’s desire to have qualitatively more advanced relations with neighbouring states than with others, with enlargement often mentioned as a model (Interviews with EEAS Officials, 2 & 6 June 2014, telephone). However, given the challenges that were experienced previously and the large financial deficits within the MENA countries, the total amounts of aid provided still appear as somewhat suppressed. This indicates that tough enlargement may have been a model; there was certainly a quantitative difference with the ENP.

A final avenue for increasing financial flows into the Mediterranean can be found in investment. As investigated in Chapter III, a core goal of the EMP had been to

increase investment to the benefit of both sides, which was reflective of European economic interests as well as the wider market-oriented causal beliefs held by the EU. A major frustration of EFP had been a lack of success in this sphere. Whereas an increase of total FDI was observed in the region until 2007 (Anima Investment Network, 2011), the Council still believed that “investment patterns in the region remain subdued ... the level of FDI inflows stands relatively low compared to other regions” (European Commission, 2006m, §1.1).<sup>117</sup> The attraction of private investment remained largely dependent on domestic reform as well as political circumstances, and in this regard the economic crisis since 2007 acted as a somewhat extraordinary intervening variable (Montero Luque & Peeters, 2009). In this context the FEMIP (see Chapter III) was a major source of loans, private equity, technical assistance and guarantees for initiatives that were viewed as beneficial to investment and the private sector (European Commission, 2006m). Funding increased gradually over the years, with 2010 as a peak year (€2.6 billion worth of investments) – between 2002 and 2010 €12 billion was invested in the MENA, and for 2007-2013 the budget available to FEMIP was set at €8.7 billion. According to the EIB, these investments created more than 30,000 jobs in SMEs in the Maghreb and Mashriq.<sup>118</sup> In addition to FEMIP, an amount of €700 million was reserved from the ENPI interregional programme for a Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF) (European Commission, 2006f).<sup>119</sup> The overall goal of this was to bring

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<sup>117</sup> Whereas in 2001 the MENA attracted 1.2% of European FDI (Quefelec, 2003) this rose to 3% in 2008 – surpassed by sub-Saharan Africa which attracted 3.3% (Eurostat, 2011, p. 103).

<sup>118</sup> It is important to add that according to World Bank estimations 100 million jobs need to be created by 2020 to actually reduce unemployment (World Bank, 2003).

<sup>119</sup> The idea was to combine grants with loans provided by multi- and bilateral European finance institutions and thus to leverage concessional lending for investment in large projects in e.g. infrastructure. According to the Commission (2010d, p. 35), the NIF “reached cruising speed in 2009”, and it has supported 39 projects for a total grant contribution of €277 million over 2008-2010 (EuropeAid, 2011, p. 28).



more tangible results for citizens in the ENP countries, to enhance donor coordination and harmonisation of procedures, and thus to increase the effectiveness and visibility of European aid (European Commission, 2009a).

Relative to the EMP, what stands out is that altogether we can observe a slight shift towards a more active approach in terms of investing in infrastructure and building up capital in the MENA. As we have said, this can be interpreted as the effect of a collective learning process based upon the fact that the strongly market-oriented expectations that had animated the EMP did not prove to be accurate. It is important to note that this mirrored gradual changes in the Bretton Woods institutions' approach, particularly the World Bank, with a relaxation of conditionality requirements and more emphasis on development assistance (see Pender, 2001; Gore, 2000).

In sum, the evidence considered here provides useful material for our second test, which requires us to analyse the nature of EU policy and to ask whether causal beliefs provided a roadmap for action. In the funding initiatives taken by the EU since 2003 this does seem to be the case, as we can observe a slight departure from previous operational principles in terms of less dependency on private markets and a more active role for the EU. The consistency between causal beliefs and policy thus provides hoop evidence in support of an important element of our hypothesis. In the following paragraphs we will analyse whether/how this was related to our hypothesis' independent variables.

### **A Stake in the Common Market?**

The European Neighbourhood Policy promised to offer the partner states better prospects at integration with the EU and greater incentives for their efforts at approximation of EU standards and regulations. As we have argued this was not fundamentally a departure from previous causal thinking, but rather a refined way to

pursue the goals that had been set in the EMP. In support of this analysis, one IMF analyst spoke of “a new mechanism to leverage domestic structural reforms” (Nsouli, 2006). This new mechanism consisted primarily of the ‘stake’ in the common market that would be on offer. The EU’s causal beliefs had thus been moderated slightly, and there is strong evidence on how this fit within the existing framework of pursuing material interests:

*[T]he objective of offering the prospect of a stake in the EU’s Internal Market to the neighbours of the enlarged EU ... will ... offer EU enterprises both a large domestic market and with easier access to abundant human or physical production factors. This will strengthen the competitiveness of EU producers and will enable them to remain present in market segments characterised by strong competition from Far East producers ...* (European Commission, 2003g, emphasis added)

Or as was asserted subsequently: “Europe cannot reach higher prosperity in a vacuum. Prosperity in third countries helps build EU prosperity and reciprocally” (European Commission, 2005b, §2.4). This provides us with relatively strong evidence in support of our claim that the EU’s economic interest consisted of market expansion and that this influenced its beliefs on how to engage with the MENA.

The ENP’s drive to lower tariff and non-tariff barriers to exports, consistent with the EU’s economic interests, could be observed in the deep-going reforms called for in the Commission’s ENP Strategy Paper of 2004 (European Commission, 2004a, pp. 15-16). While the EU’s Washington Consensus-inspired structural adjustment principles were moderated slightly over time, there continued to be strong emphasis on market-

based reform.<sup>120</sup> The Action Plans contained relatively detailed lists of actions to be taken with regards to trade and macroeconomic stability. In the case of Morocco, for example, the AP stressed the removal of NTBs via policies such as continued reform in the financial sector, the introduction of a comprehensive agricultural policy that would enable modernisation and liberalisation, modernisation of customs services, alignment of Moroccan legislation on industrial products with the EU, gradual capital account liberalisation, and modernisation of the tax system in line with international and EU standards (Euro-Med Partnership, 2005g; see also European Commission 2003b). Evidently this was an extensive list, evincing a comprehensive theory of cause-and-effect within the economic sphere. This contrasts notably with the political sphere (first basket), where a much less clearly thought-out strategy existed.

As mentioned, one of the issues highlighted in the previous chapter was the tension between absolute and relative benefits in the EMP. Whereas the overall emphasis in the EU's Mediterranean policy has been on absolute benefits and the need to forestall a widening of disparities between north and south, we have also seen that there is some evidence of relative or zero-sum interests influencing European behaviour, often in a more 'negative' sense. From this point of view perhaps the most important common denominator in the APs was the idea of liberalisation of trade in services and

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<sup>120</sup> This outlook was warmly welcomed by the International Monetary Fund, whose economic views on the Mediterranean were broadly analogous. In a newspaper article on the Maghreb (published in Morocco's *L'économiste*), the Fund's managing director put the need for continued structural adjustment as follows: "To take greater advantage of the potential of the EU Association Agreements and the Wider European Neighbourhood, it is in the Maghreb countries' interest to facilitate trade among themselves as well as with the European Union. They should build the institutions that are necessary to pursue common goals and share best practices, including in banking reform, tax reform, and capital account liberalization" (De Rato, 2005).

agricultural goods, which had been a highly problematic aspect of the EMP.<sup>121</sup> Given the importance of services in the modern world-economy<sup>122</sup> as well as the Med states' long-standing interest in European concessions on market access for agricultural goods, the renewed focus on these issues in the ENP marked a potential step forward in the pursuit of the Barcelona Declaration's long-term goals (see Euro-Med Partnership, 2005d, §8.a). In its review of the ENP in 2006 the Commission set itself the goal of extending the free trade area to be 'deep and comprehensive', which "should cover substantially all trade in goods and services" including "products of particular importance for our partners" (i.e.: agriculture) (European Commission, 2006b, §3.1).<sup>123</sup> In this light services and agriculture can serve as a useful testing-ground for our hypothesis and to explore some of the (potential) challenges that were experienced with regards to material variables in the ENP.

As far as services was concerned, particularly so-called 'backbone' services such as transport, telecommunications and finance could generate an important

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<sup>121</sup> For Jordan, the AP underlined "measures to improve business conditions to enhance growth and increase investment"; "further liberalisation of trade, in goods and agriculture"; and "a progressive liberalisation of trade in services" (Euro-Med Partnership, 2005e). In the case of Egypt, priorities were said to include: "negotiation of an agreement on liberalising trade in services"; "increase economic integration with the EU, particularly by taking steps to the gradual liberalization of trade in services and on the right of establishment and to liberalize trade in agriculture"; and "the development of a climate conducive to foreign direct investment, growth and sustainable development" (Euro-Med Partnership, 2007a). As a final example, Tunisia's priorities included: "the development of conditions conducive to foreign direct investment, growth and sustainable development"; "improving the climate and conditions for the development of competitive businesses and entrepreneurship"; "facilitating trade in goods and services"; and "the approximation of technical regulations, standards and conformity assessment procedures" (Euro-Med Partnership, 2005f).

<sup>122</sup> The services sector has been responsible for about 75% of employment in the EU and between 50 and 60% of GDP in the Med partner states (European Commission, 2006j).

<sup>123</sup> The AAs had set a five year deadline for the start of negotiations on services liberalisation. This deadline elapsed for many EMP partners, including Tunisia, Morocco, Israel and Lebanon.

connection between north and south and provide the needed infrastructure for a genuine free trade zone.<sup>124</sup> Liberalisation of trade in services could have significant positive impacts: one OECD report concluded that it “generates substantial welfare gains ... at least of the same magnitude as goods liberalisation” (cited in Müller-Jentsch, 2005, p. 22). In addition, a more specific case study of Egypt by the World Bank revealed that an increase of up to 21% of GNP could be achieved through the reduction of import and export barriers in this sphere (Hoekman & Konan, 1999). Another example is Tunisia, where the projected benefits of liberalisation of trade in services significantly exceeded the expected benefits of goods liberalisation (Konan & Maskus, 2000). A strong argument thus existed in support of liberalisation of the services sector. It could serve European interests and produce benefits for the Med partners as well, serving as a good example of an arena of potential shared gains.

However, as attested to by the difficult experience of the European Single Market in this field (establishing a customs Union regarding services policies has proven to be rather contentious), services liberalisation is typically a slow and complicated process. According to the World Bank, it “continues to rank among the most complex subject matters in modern trade diplomacy” (World Bank, 2009, p. 1).<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Following WTO standards, four modes of trade in services can be distinguished: 1) cross-border supply (e.g. online purchases); 2) consumption abroad (mainly tourism); 3) commercial presence (e.g. the establishment of a branch of a bank or supermarket abroad, which also links services to investment and the right of establishment); and 4) the presence of natural persons (e.g. foreign consultancy or seasonal labour) (Müller-Jentsch, 2005).

<sup>125</sup> Two main reasons can be identified for this (FEMISE, 2008, p. 90). First, the implementation of non-discriminatory treatment often has a limited effect on the services sector given the importance of domestic regulatory frameworks. One option would be to harmonise rules, but this ‘one size fits all’ approach is often costly and could eliminate certain firms’ comparative advantages in so far as they are rooted in domestic legislation. Another option is mutual recognition of ‘core’ rules, but this often leads negotiators to seek inclusion of regulations which are primarily beneficial to domestic service providers (and possibly detrimental to foreign companies). Europe’s own solution to this issue is laid down in the rather hotly

In the case of Euro-Mediterranean trade, the ENP's language of a stake in the common market and the provisions of the Action Plans indicate that, where applicable, the EU's rules and regulations (in combination with international standards) would serve as a benchmark for harmonisation (e.g. in company law, accounting and auditing rules) (see Marouani & Munro, 2009; Kox & Lejour, 2006). This would be beneficial for European companies, as additional investment options abroad would emerge under such an arrangement without any required reforms. The benefits for the Med countries would once again be situated in the sphere of inbound foreign investment (see Euro-Med Partnership, 2009a, p. 2). This serves as further hoop support for our perspective, as we can see how the EU's position was consistent with its hypothesised interest in European market expansion.

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debated EC Services Directive of 2006 (Directive 2006/123/EC), which is based on a third option, namely the principle of the country of origin. Under this principle companies are essentially able to export services under the rules and regulations that apply within their home country. This system is not without its problems though, and it includes the risk of a 'race to the bottom' to attain comparative advantage as well as the obligatory importation of services of a lower standard than what is applied domestically. The fact that many member states (including Belgium, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Slovenia and Spain) missed the December 2009 deadline to fully transpose the Services Directive into their domestic legal systems illustrates how politically complex the process has proven to be (EurActiv, 2008). It is not surprising, therefore, that for Euro-Med trade such a solution was not considered as an option. A second major difficulty pertains to the nature of the products on offer in the services sector. More than goods, where a single decision to eliminate tariffs could boost competition, services are heterogeneous and dynamic, requiring therefore constant review of existing regulations. A country thus needs to trust its trading partners "not to establish new barriers, but also, above all, to enact and to enforce a continuous flow of pro-active and pro-competitive regulatory reforms in the years to come" (FEMISE, 2008, p. 91). This requires a large amount of resources, technical expertise, openness, and coordination between countries – factors which are often constrained in developing economies such as those of the Maghreb and the Mashriq.

Several challenges existed, however, primarily pertaining to the GATS<sup>126</sup> and the Med states' limited previous commitments (European Commission, 2006j).<sup>127</sup> After what was described as 'a strong push' by the Commission (2004a), the Euro-Med working group on trade in services drafted a non-binding document that was endorsed at the 2004 Istanbul Ministerial meeting (Euro-Med Partnership, 2004c, §4).<sup>128</sup> This 'Istanbul Framework' (which did not address the right of establishment) was inspired by the language of the GATS, including a positive list approach and a regional most-favoured nation clause, but with the added option for the Med partners to bilaterally conclude further-going agreements without EU involvement (allowing for more extensive south-south trade) (European Commission, 2006j). This marked a first step, leading to further discussion at the 5<sup>th</sup> Euro-Mediterranean trade ministerial conference in Marrakech (24 March 2006). At the start of the conference, EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson made clear his intention to "begin the work of putting services at the heart of [Euro-Mediterranean] trade" (Mandelson, 2006). This was reflected in the

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<sup>126</sup> GATS stands for 'General Agreement on Trade in Services'; it was one of the main results of the WTO's Uruguay round and entered into force in 1995. (All EU member states and about half of the Med partners are WTO members [except Algeria, Lebanon, the PA and Syria]). Article II of GATS obliges members to reciprocally extend treatment of services no less favourable than that accorded to any other country (the most favoured nation [MFN] arrangement), but they were allowed to select in which specific sectors they would make commitments to freeze or lower tariffs (this system is referred to as a 'positive list' approach). An exception to the MFN rule could only be made in case of 'economic integration agreements', providing for substantial sector coverage, elimination of substantially all discrimination between the parties, and development-related flexibilities (e.g. asymmetric commitments) (European Commission, 2006j).

<sup>127</sup> Generally speaking the Mediterranean countries had commitments in fewer sectors than most other countries at similar levels of development. Egypt, for example, had commitments in only four sectors and Tunisia in three. Jordan was an exception with all 11 sectors selected under GATS. See for the full list of commitments and exemptions: [[http://www.wto.org/english/tratop\\_e/serv\\_e/serv\\_commitments\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/serv_e/serv_commitments_e.htm)], accessed 20 January 2012.

<sup>128</sup> See: [[http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2004/july/tradoc\\_118225.pdf](http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2004/july/tradoc_118225.pdf)] for the framework (accessed 20 January 2012).

conference's conclusions, where it was said that "the liberalisation of services and the right of establishment is an indispensable step in establishing a genuine Free Trade Area by 2010" (Euro-Med Partnership, 2006d).

Following this reaffirmation of political will, a two-track negotiating structure was chosen to take matters further, including a multilateral dimension for issues of common interest (as represented by the Framework Protocol) and a bilateral track for country-specific issues. Regional-level negotiations started in July 2006 (involving the EU, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia), and several rounds of negotiations were subsequently conducted. These talks focused on a non-paper that had been proposed by the EU, which included a framework for regulatory alignment in *inter alia* computer services, postal and courier services, financial services, international maritime transport services and telecommunication services (Egypt Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2008). However, owing to disagreements over the scope and areas of liberalisation the negotiations were not successful, and the goal of presenting a text at the trade ministerial meeting in Lisbon was not reached (Euro-Med Partnership, 2007b). Further efforts until 2010, bilateral and regional, were equally unsuccessful (see European Commission, 2011a; 2010a; Euro-Med Partnership, 2008b; Barroso, 2008).

How does this picture fit into our analytical framework? First of all, as said the EU's behaviour appears as consistent with its interest in market expansion and a strengthening of the competitiveness of European businesses. Without an appreciation of this variable it would be very difficult to account for the nature of EU policy in this sphere. However, there were several complications and challenges, and it is remarkable that despite strong interest from both sides no agreement could be concluded. The evidence suggests that in large part the observed failure could be explained in terms of the EU's emphasis on issues of *relative* rather than *absolute* benefit. In other words,



despite the possibility of services liberalisation to benefit all parties involved the emphasis was on matters mostly beneficial to Europe (e.g. financial services; Tovias, 2007).

Thus, what we see here is that the EU has an interest in market expansion and a causal belief that Euro-Mediterranean services liberalisation would strengthen EU competitiveness, which is part of the larger set of causal beliefs focused on strengthening market forces in the MENA. Yet in several ways the scope for EU action was limited by a tension between relative and shared interests. For example, an important bargaining chip could have been a relaxation of restrictions in Mode 4 of the GATS framework (presence of natural persons), as requested for example by Egypt during both regional and bilateral negotiations (Egypt Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2008). But given the EU's scrapping of the 'workers' aspect of the four freedoms this potentially useful incentive could not be utilised (see also Hoekman & Özden, 2010). Further contributing was the fact that the EU had not moved towards a fully-fledged Euro-Mediterranean Development Bank for investment in backbone services (see Chapter III). The lack of commitment implied arguably discouraged further steps towards a loss of regulatory sovereignty in the services sector for the MENA partners (Knio, 2010, p. 118).<sup>129</sup> Once again this highlights how the evidence supports some

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<sup>129</sup> This was despite reaffirmations of support from the European Parliament (2011, §9), members of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly (Council of Europe, 2006), and the Mediterranean states (Marweb, 2010; Mira, 2002). As the Commission said: "It is expected that reaching higher business volumes would be facilitated by the greater involvement of Mediterranean countries in the subsidiary's governance and extended local presence ... [L]ending activities could go beyond the levels contemplated for FEMIP, reaching EUR 1.8bn in 2009 and then a cruising speed of EUR 2.6bn by 2013" (2006m, §2.5). Moreover, such a move "would strengthen [Europe's] political presence in the region and anchor its commitment vis-à-vis its Mediterranean counterparts" (Knio, 2010, p. 116). Until now the idea has been supported by southern member states such as Italy and Spain, but northern member states like Germany, Britain, Germany, Latvia, the Netherlands and Sweden have continued to express reservations (see Euro-Med Partnership, 2011).

important elements of our hypothesis, but also that we must be sensitive to variation within the sort of economic interests pursued by the EU. When an interest is broadly shared, it appears easier for the EU to convince Mediterranean partners to accept its point of view as there is more leeway to provide incentives and thus to make sure that the arrangement is truly of benefit to all. In fact, the (potential of) disagreement between the member states was strongly underlined as a significant challenge to devising impactful EU policy in the MENA (Interview with EEAS Official, 3 June 2014, telephone).

A parallel can be drawn with the earlier situation regarding reciprocal agricultural liberalisation, as discussed in Chapter III. Here the prospect of MENA competition with southern European products had posed a formidable barrier to progress (European Commission, 2006k, p. 3; Garcia-Alvarez-Coque, 2002). In addition to services, agricultural liberalisation formed the most concrete part of the ‘stake’ in the common market. The first step that was taken was the adoption of the ‘Euro-Mediterranean roadmap for agriculture’ (also known as the ‘Rabat Roadmap’) at the 10-year anniversary of the EMP (Euro-Med Partnership, 2005d). It is interesting to note that there was explicit mention of EU ‘offensive’ and ‘defensive’ interests in this roadmap (European Commission, 2006k, §7). Both could be said to represent different kinds of material interests, with the distinction between absolute and relative, as we have highlighted in Chapter II. On the offensive side it was mentioned that EU exports enjoyed very little liberalisation, and there was concern regarding Latin American and US competition in the region (ibid., §4). This gives a good indication of the potential material advantages and the underlying economic interests driving European policy. Defensively, the main concern remained to be increased competition from the MENA itself. Reflecting the ENP’s causal logic, the approach that was favoured in the

Roadmap was intended to be flexible and tailored to individual partners, including the option of asymmetrical timetables for liberalisation to reflect developmental differences between the EU and the Med partners. Yet the main innovation was the replacement of the old gradualist system (periodical reviews leading to limited mutual concessions based on traditional trade flows) for a comprehensive liberalisation process for all sectors, with the option of exclusion of sensitive products to protect defensive interests (a so-called ‘negative list’ approach). The first partner state with whom an agreement was made under this renewed philosophy was Jordan in early 2006 (Euro-Med Partnership, 2006e). Negotiations with other EMP countries followed: in February 2006 Morocco agreed to holding talks, and during that year Israel and Egypt also made overtures towards the Union. Concrete deals to emerge out of these negotiations were with Israel (Euro-Med Partnership, 2009b), Egypt (Euro-Med Partnership, 2010), and the Palestinian Authority (Europolitics, 2011).<sup>130</sup> But did the new direction mark a transcendence of earlier tensions?

In light of this question the case of Morocco provides some interesting insights. Pursuant to King Mohamed VI’s remarks on a state visit to France in 2005 Morocco was granted ‘advanced status’ in October 2008, the most important implications of which were integration with the single market, the gradual adoption of the Community *acquis*, and the opening up of Community programmes to Moroccan participation

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<sup>130</sup> E.g. the agreement with Egypt contained full liberalisation for all products except tobacco, wines, spirits and pig meat, while the EU maintained its calendars, tariff quotas and entry price levels for ‘sensitive’ products such as tomatoes, cucumbers, artichokes, courgettes, grapes, garlic, strawberries, rice, sugar, and processed tuna and sardines (ibid.). Though not without benefits for Egypt, the agreement was thus somewhat skewed in favour of the EU – as EU Commissioner Fischer Boel said: it will “strengthen the position of European exporters on what is our most significant market in the Middle East region” (European Commission, 2008a).

(Euro-Med Partnership, 2008c).<sup>131</sup> The EU-Morocco agreement of 2008 did not address agricultural liberalisation, but after long negotiations a deal was finally agreed upon in 2009. It provides for progressively implemented full market access for European tinned food, dairy products, oilseeds, fish, fruits and vegetables (up to 70% of exports). Morocco, for its part, would gain better access to Europe's fruit and vegetable sector, excluding however tomatoes, strawberries, courgettes, cucumbers, garlic and clementines (entry prices were maintained across the board) (European Commission, 2010b). Like previous agreements this seemed favourable from a European point of view, but Morocco's access to the EU market remained limited (Kausch, 2010, p. 4).<sup>132</sup> This was also the case with the other agreements, which generally maintained quotas and tariffs on imports in excess of the defined quantities. For sensitive products such as

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<sup>131</sup> It remains unclear exactly how this is different from the ENP itself – one Commission official admitted that “it doesn't mean anything concrete” (cited in Bremberg, 2011, p. 11) – especially as the advanced status continued to fall short of the ‘everything but the institutions’ formula (Kausch, 2010; Jaidi & Martín, 2010). In a 2011 Communication (responding to the Arab Spring) the Commission described advanced status as allowing for “significantly strengthened political dialogue”, “increased links between the partner country and EU institutions”, “deeper engagement on mobility”, and “improved market access to the EU” (European Commission, 2011b).

<sup>132</sup> Within the EU there was nevertheless notable concern regarding trade concessions during a period of economic crisis, which was said to be “jeopardising farmers' futures, as well as the development of many European regions” (Economic and Social Committee, 2010, §6.10). An Opinion drafted by the European Parliament's Agricultural Committee recommended rejection of the EU-Morocco deal. Amongst the cited reasons we find: “potential negative economic repercussions on regions which specialise in vegetable cultivation”; “an objective imbalance in the tariff reductions agreed upon by the two parties”; “the issue of the Western Sahara territories”; “competitiveness problems caused by labour cost differentials”; and finally the fact that “Community producers already have to deal with the substantial quota increases resulting from agreements with other Mediterranean countries” (European Parliament, 2011a). In this sense there appears to have been a remarkable mix of normative concerns (Western Sahara) and straightforward trade interests, and the crisis was further deepened when extension of an EU-Morocco fisheries agreement was also rejected by Parliament in late 2011 – leading to a direct Moroccan ban on European fishing (European Parliament, 2011b; BBC, 2011). The EU-Morocco agricultural agreement was finally passed by the European Parliament in February 2012 (European Parliament, 2012b).

tomatoes and cucumbers seasonal windows and entry price levels were also maintained, though often in a slightly more flexible manner.

What, in conclusion, does the process of services and agriculture liberalisation tell us about the validity of our hypothesis? First of all, we may note that relatively strong hoop evidence exists in support of the hypothesised causal relationship between economic interests, causal beliefs and behaviour. The EU's policies have in general been consistent with an interest in market expansion and strengthening competitiveness, and this explains many of the features of the more detailed proposals put forward by the EU. In this regard there is strong support for asserting that economic interests are a necessary variable for accounting for the EU's Mediterranean policies. Furthermore, in response to the failings of the EMP's more limited approach it has been observed that there was a push to reach a more united stance on liberalising services and agriculture, strengthening shared interests by ameliorating intra-EU divisions. However, the ongoing challenges observed in this field highlight how there continued to be a degree of tension between differing kinds of material interests. This reconfirms how variations within economic interests can have important consequences for the scope of EU foreign policy.

**Table 14: The ENP and Economic Policy**

<b>EU problem definition</b>	Insufficient progress in EMP liberalisation programme, limited market access, persistent north-south inequality
<b>Policy Methods and Instruments</b>	Deeper reforms needed via actor-specific offers of benefits, 'stake' in common market, enlargement-inspired approach, more effective utilisation of EFP potential

<b>Expected outcomes</b>	Increased market access and strengthened competitiveness for EU businesses, welfare gains in MENA
<b>Evidence in support of hypothesis</b>	Usage of enlargement instruments, FEMIP increase, market-based reform emphasis, push to include services and agriculture
<b>Challenges</b>	Tension between shared and zero-sum interests in EU
<b>Actual outcomes</b>	2010 FTZ deadline missed, no services liberalisation, limited agricultural liberalisation, modest improvement of reciprocal market access but with advantage for EU
<b>Conclusion</b>	Strong evidence in support of hypothesised relationship between economic interests, causal beliefs and behaviour, but challenges continue to draw attention to differentiation between EU economic interests

### ***Cultural Cooperation and JHA***

Now that we have investigated both the political and economic dimensions of Euro-Med relations under the ENP, with each shedding light on the role of ideational and material variables in the EU's policies, the final dimension that must be considered is that which had previously been the third basket of the EMP. As we have seen this was broken up into two baskets, one focusing on what was called human affairs and the other on justice and home affairs. Given the tentative nature of efforts in both these spheres within the EMP until 2003, we have previously argued that our evidence for the third/fourth basket does not lend strong support for wider theoretical claims. In this section we will analyse to what extent this changed under the ENP.

We begin by testing our hypothesis in light of the EU's policies in the field of human affairs, focusing on cultural and decentralised actions. Our findings indicate that in a departure from earlier efforts a clearer causal theory was now connected to the third basket, enabling it to play a stronger role within the ENP. Most significantly, the cultural sector was viewed as capable of playing a supportive role for the other dimensions of the ENP, serving not so much as a goal in itself but rather offering a tool to realise ambitions in other spheres of Euro-Med relations. This neither confirms nor falsifies our hypothesis, given that the third basket's instrumentalism can be connected to our independent variables. Secondly we investigate the JHA dimension of the ENP. What is striking here is how anti-immigration and anti-terror measures came to play an increasingly significant role in the EU's policies, verifying that the overtures observed in Chapter II represented a trend of sorts, which poses some challenges to our hypothesis. In light of these challenges we will be able to discuss our fourth empirical test – pertaining to the sufficiency of our hypothesis to explain EFP – in the final conclusions of this chapter.

### **Towards Cultural Instrumentalism?**

A weakness of the third basket that has been mentioned in Chapter III was that there appeared to be little connection with the other two baskets of the EMP (Pace, 2005, p. 65). In this regard the third basket seemed somewhat divorced from the main causal beliefs underpinning the EMP, but given the problems that were experienced and the limited range of action we have argued that the available data does not clearly support a particular theoretical vision. How does our hypothesis hold up in light of subsequent EU policies?

When the ENP was introduced in 2003 the Commission did not specifically address cultural/decentralised cooperation. Yet in 2006 it identified the human

dimension as an area where progress could be made: “the ENP must have a ‘human face’, and citizens of the EU and of the neighbouring countries should have more opportunities to interact ... On both sides of the borders, people should be able to see directly the impact of a stronger bond between the Union and its neighbours” (2006f, p. 6). Obtaining publicly ‘tangible’ results became an often referenced goal of the third basket, and it could be said that this provides some indication as to the envisioned linkage with other EU-Med activities. This perspective allowed for greater integration with the ENP’s predominant causal beliefs, highlighting how intercultural programmes were not necessarily a goal as such but came to be viewed as a wider instrument in the ENP’s toolbox.

Following the shift from MEDA to ENPI a variety of specific programmes was incorporated into the new instrument, including EuroMed Audiovisual, Heritage, Youth and Gender, as well as a Regional Information and Communication programme. The cumulative budget for the latter set of programmes was €67m, corresponding to 19.5% of the ENPI’s overall regional budget (€343.3m) (European Commission, 2006n, p. 53). Relative to the total ENPI budget this was a small sum, but a strengthened sense of purpose was evident in some of the EU’s statements, such as the first Agenda for Culture (adopted in 2007). The Agenda stated that intercultural dialogue is “one of the main instruments of peace and conflict prevention”, emphasising also its function to “convey important messages in third countries about Europe” (European Commission, 2007e, p. 7).<sup>133</sup> Whilst this suggests a potential public diplomacy role, with a view to the Lisbon Strategy there was also an economic rationale: “Creativity is the basis for social and technological innovation, and therefore an important driver of growth,

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<sup>133</sup> With regard to such ‘messages’, it was said in the internal context that “culture can contribute to ‘seduce’ European citizens to the idea of European integration” (KEA European Affairs, 2006, p. 1).



competitiveness and jobs in the EU” (ibid., p. 9).<sup>134</sup> Altogether this gave the third basket an added instrumentalist, politico-economic flavour. It is notable that decentralised action was justified from a very wide range of perspectives. For example, a link was made between anti-terror policies and cultural dialogue. In the words of the EU’s counter-terrorism coordinator:

*[I]nter-cultural understanding enhances the legitimacy and effectiveness of our counter-terrorism policies, because it demonstrates that these are not directed against one community or religion. Therefore, as a EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, I fully recognise the benefits of inter-cultural dialogue to ... ‘the struggle for hearts and minds’.* (De Kerchove, 2007, p. 2)

These comments shed some further light on how intercultural dialogue was viewed by some important actors in the EU’s foreign policy making establishment. Rather than being a desirable objective in its own right, culture was at least in part believed to enhance the legitimacy and effectiveness of practices in different areas of cooperation. What is more, as it was connected to ‘the struggle for hearts and minds’ it is difficult to escape the impression that it sometimes took the form of unidirectional public diplomacy rather than ‘exchange’. One example can be found in an EU-sponsored event on study abroad opportunities for Palestinian students – undertaken in light of the TEMPUS and Erasmus Mundus programmes for higher education exchange that had

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<sup>134</sup> Or as one report advised: “The prediction is that the cultural and creative sector is going to become as important as car-making and coal mining once used to be. Europe’s competitiveness in the world will depend on its ability to nurture its creative talents and industries” (KEA European Affairs, 2006, p. 187). The Committee of the Regions expressed some reservations: “despite its wholehearted support ... [the Committee] would nonetheless warn against placing one-sided emphasis on the purely economic importance of culture in this context” (Committee of the Regions, 2008a, §8).

been opened for the Med countries<sup>135</sup> – that was attended by this author (Palestine Polytechnic University, Hebron, October 2010). The general impression was that the EU was trying to promote a specific image of Europe, rather than facilitate dialogue, whilst most of the offered programmes were not actually open to the students that were present. In another example, also drawn from the Palestinian case, an EU-sponsored television quiz named *Stars* (after the EU flag) asked students questions about the European Union (Maan News, 2009). What these concrete examples confirm is that third basket activities sometimes focused on projecting an image of Europe abroad rather than inviting reciprocal dialogue – this being consistent with the more instrumentalist public diplomacy role implied by winning ‘hearts and minds’.<sup>136</sup>

One innovation of the post-2003 period in particular is significant: the Anna Lindh Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures (ALF). Headquartered in Alexandria (Egypt), it was launched in 2005 with the overall purpose of “[contributing] to the visibility of the Barcelona Process through intellectual, cultural and civil society exchange” (Euro-Med Partnership, 2004d, §II.1). The focus on the ‘visibility’ of the EMP implies a primary role of gaining support for the ENP’s other dimensions. The

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<sup>135</sup> Particularly after the unrest experienced in the Middle East and North Africa in response to the cartoons published by the *Jyllands-Posten* on 30 September 2005, there was emphasis on the role of education. As Benita Ferrero-Waldner argued: “The cartoon crisis was a particularly disturbing example of the gulf of misunderstanding between us ... [W]e all have work to do to fight prejudice and to build bridges of greater understanding and respect between us. How do we do this? The answer is education” (Ferrero-Waldner, 2006b).

<sup>136</sup> Some statements from the European Parliament also underline such an interpretation: “Europe’s cultural heritage ... has, over the course of history, placed Europe in the vanguard of all the continents, proved to be an unrivalled driver of innovation, development and progress, which has spread in every direction, and today still constitutes an essential reference point for humanism, spiritual enrichment and enlivenment, democracy, tolerance, and citizenship”; “in an increasingly globalised world, the outstanding specific qualities contained within the nucleus of Europe’s cultural richness constitute genuine European added value and their identity-giving role is vital for Europe and the Union in that it helps ... assert themselves in relation to other peoples” (European Parliament, 2009, F, G, K).

main instrument of the Foundation has been a region-wide ‘network of networks’ of civil society actors (43 networks in total<sup>137</sup>), but as detailed in its 2005-2008 programme it would also directly organise events, co-organise initiatives with external actors, and launch calls for proposals (Euro-Med Partnership, 2006a, p. 48). The co-ownership incorporated in the Foundation’s headquartering in Egypt as well as the concrete institutionalisation of cultural dialogue and cooperation have been utilised as evidence in support of a ‘socialisation perspective’ (Nicolaïdis & Nicolaïdis, 2004; see below). As admitted, however: “It would be naive to believe that such a Foundation can itself create we-ness in the region” (ibid., p. 13). What is more, funding was not wholly institutionalised and has been dependent on voluntary contributions from the Euro-Med states (€5.7m, topped up to €12.7m by the Commission for 2008-2011) (Anna Lindh Foundation, 2011, p. 142). This subjected the Foundation to budgetary insecurity and implied a rather low level of overall EU commitment. Furthermore, the dependency on funding by states who might feel threatened by overtly ‘political’ initiatives led to the revision of various initiatives that were considered too controversial. As Aliboni writes: “to put it bluntly, a degree of censorship was used” (2009, p. 5; see also Khalifa, 2010).

In the terminology of our theoretical framework, what is notable is that the evidence suggests how an additional element was added to the ENP roadmap. It was believed that public apprehensions regarding political and economic collaboration between north and south might form a barrier, which is why cultural approximation came to play a more defined role in Euro-Med relations. Yet this remained rather limited in relation to the wider ENP and was mostly subsumed within the existing set of causal beliefs. Given this instrumentalisation, the third basket does not imply a

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<sup>137</sup> The total composition has been: NGOs (53%), public institutions; (9%), foundations (13%); local and regional authorities (2.4%); individuals (2.8%); and private organisations (9%) (Anna Lindh Foundation, 2011, p. 12).

significantly altered set of drivers than those incorporated in the other areas of the ENP/EMP. In other words, the evidence suggests that third basket was mostly instrumental for, rather than a challenge to, wider economic interests and/or principled beliefs. This is not to underplay the fact that the EU *did* formulate an approach in which cultural approximation was a policy tool, but in terms of the wider problem diagnoses and suggested solutions there is no evidence that this played a *principal* role in the ENP. Therefore, in our view the evidence considered neither undermines nor strongly supports our hypothesis.

**Table 15: Human Affairs and the ENP**

<b>EU problem definition</b>	Insufficient visibility ENP, potential resistance to EU policies
<b>Policy Methods and Instruments</b>	Decentralised cooperation; focus on education, culture, Anna Lindh Foundation
<b>Expected outcomes</b>	Winning hearts and minds, broaden support for EU and ENP
<b>Evidence in support of hypothesis</b>	Limited → addition potentially made to ENP roadmap
<b>Challenges</b>	Limited prioritisation and funding, censorship in ALF
<b>Actual outcomes</b>	Not enough evidence to reach a firm conclusion
<b>Conclusion</b>	Played an instrumental role to wider ENP, overall of limited significance

### **Justice and Home Affairs**

As argued in Chapter III, the priority awarded to cooperation on issues pertaining to JHA increased since the Common Strategy of 2000, 9/11 and the April 2002 Valencia Action Plan. Within the design of the ENP as well as the ESS there was a further

augmentation of this dimension. It was openly admitted by the Commission: “In the wake of September 11, the second Intifada and the war in Iraq ... issues related to justice and home affairs, border control, the fight against terrorism and crime have come to the forefront in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership” (European Commission, 2006n, p. 7). This orientation was further fuelled by events such as the Madrid train bombings of 11 March 2004 and the London bombings of 7 July 2005 (Q&A with Marc Otte, 3 December 2010, Londo).

With regards to terrorism, since 2000 the EMP Association Agreements contained specific clauses, stating e.g. in the case of Algeria that “both Parties agree to cooperate with a view to preventing and penalising acts of terrorism ... through the exchange of information” and by “pooling experience of means and practices for combating terrorism, including experience in the technical and training field” (Euro-Med Partnership, 2005a, §90). The Valencia Action Plan stressed that “the Barcelona Process cannot remain indifferent to the phenomenon of Terrorism” (Euro-Med Partnership, 2002, §2(a)), while under the Spanish and Greek presidencies efforts were intensified to involve Mediterranean states in the ESDP. In May 2004 it was decided at the Euro-Med conference in Dublin to intensify both regional and bilateral counter-terror cooperation, and opportunities for engaging in operational joint activities were also explored (European Commission, 2005a). In addition, the EU’s counter-terrorism strategy of November 2005 highlighted assistance to the Maghreb and the Mashriq (European Council, 2005, §5), and efforts were made to prioritise the issue of terrorism at the EMP’s 10 year anniversary. Whilst the familiar problems between Israel and the Arab states persisted, it was notable that the EU now “tried instead to force their own agenda onto their partners” (Bicchi & Martin, 2006, p. 202). Yet the result – the Euro-Mediterranean Code of Conduct on Countering Terrorism (Euro-Med Partnership,

2005h) – was rather limited and did not provide a definition of terrorism. Nevertheless, on the basis of the abovementioned developments it was argued by some that “counter-terrorism measures have eclipsed other agendas and human rights in particular” (Amnesty International, 2005, p. 4; see also Wennerholm et. al., 2010). Importantly, if true this would *not* mean that principled beliefs did not play a role in EU policy at all, but it *would* indicate that different (intervening) variables were involved as more significant drivers of EFP.

Bilaterally, cooperation and assistance programmes were initiated with Algeria and Morocco, with technical assistance given for e.g. anti-radicalisation measures and border security (Wolff, 2009, p. 149). However, limited financial resources and a lack of counter-terror experts were identified as the major obstacles to maximising EU leverage (European Council, 2007b, p. 10) – a problem to which the ‘Instrument for Stability’ was a partial solution. Though the EU decided to support the Algiers-based African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (see Council Joint Action 2007/501/CFSP – the first CFSP Joint Action in the field of terrorism), overall cooperation has mostly been limited to issues such as judicial reform and policing. Given the illiberal nature of most MENA regimes, such a focus on law-enforcement could potentially complicate the promotion of human rights. For example, criticism on the EU’s policing mission in the West Bank, EUPOL COPPS, though subject to the complex dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, can serve as a reminder of the risks of a purely technical approach: “The insistence on separating the teaching of technical skills from the political reality and the overall security system has created a police force that is highly skilled and yet easily co-opted by political leaders” (Kristoff, 2012, p. 13). In this light it can be said that EU action increasingly focused on repressing terrorism through policing rather than addressing its root causes through long-term reformative

programmes (Watanabe, 2011, p. 4). As Richard Gillespie has concluded, cooperation in this sphere was not “part of a broader region-building project based on shared understandings” (2002, p. 10).

In light of the above it would go too far to assert that anti-terror measures have significantly ‘eclipsed’ other areas of the ENP. Funding was relatively limited and there were no major overtures to put terrorism at the top of the agenda. However, it is certainly true that a shift towards wider inclusion of anti-terror cooperation in the ENP took place. What this shift indicates is that the earlier causal belief that economic progress would promote stability and security was gradually supplemented by a more short-term impulse to action. In this regard it further underlines the way in which causal beliefs were refined in response to changing circumstances, but the link to our independent variables is less direct than was the case for some of the other elements that we have discussed. As we will discuss below as well as in Chapter VI, this suggests that principled beliefs and economic interests might not be fully sufficient to account for the EU’s Mediterranean policies.

A final element that is of importance is that of immigration. After all, as discussed at length in the previous chapter immigration had played a role in the causal beliefs that animated the EMP. It was believed that migratory pressures could be ameliorated by providing stability and prosperity through economic modernisation. However, similar to anti-terror, as results in this sphere failed to materialise it is possible to identify a gradually more reactive/repressive approach in the EU. For some, the reinvention of the Barcelona Process was directly related: “It is plain, even for an EU member far from the Mediterranean, why a Euro-Med Partnership is necessary, given the concerns throughout the Union about ... illegal immigration” (UK House of Commons, 2005, §16.9). Another factor driving an increasingly short-term approach

was the presumed link between migration and security. For example, the EU's counter-terror strategy stated that "we need to enhance protection of our external borders to make it harder for known or suspected terrorists to enter or operate within the EU" (European Council, 2005, §16). Some even went so far as to claim that "illegal immigration is infiltrated by Al Qaeda" and that it is often run "by terrorists in order to bring persons, weapons and drugs to Italy and Europe" (Antonio Martino, former Italian minister of defence, cited in Cuttitta, 2007, p. 6). There was furthermore a significant degree of scandalisation of the topic, as illustrated by newspaper headlines such as "Malta fears it will sink under growing tide of migrants from Africa" (The Daily Telegraph, 2005).<sup>138</sup> Underlining the general sense of urgency was the fact that the EU 'big five' organised joint return flights of illegal immigrants (The Independent, 2005).

In this charged political context there has been a proliferation of measures to improve immigration controls and cooperation, but it must be noted that most of these measures were initiated at the member state level (see also Khader, 2005).<sup>139</sup> Migration was recognised in the five year EMP work plan of 2005, which emphasised the need to "reduce significantly the level of illegal migration" and to "reinforce judicial co-operation, including on cross border issues" (Euro-Med Partnership, 2005d, §11(b)-(d)). €10m of the Development Cooperation Instrument (nearly as much as the entire Anna

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<sup>138</sup> Similar sentiments could sometimes be found in the south, e.g. in Morocco's *Al-Shamal*: "Black locusts are taking over Morocco!" (cited in Goldschmidt, 2009, p. 1)

<sup>139</sup> For example, under the Neptune programme of 2003 Tunisia and Libya cooperated with Greece, Malta, Italy and the UK in the first joint surveillance exercise of EU external sea borders (Cuttitta, 2007, p. 14). Since 2004 joint Moroccan-Spanish patrols have taken place, and an EU-funded project (AENAS programme, €120m [see Regulation 491/2004]) was held over 2004-06 to provide financial and technical assistance to third states (EuropeAid, 2006). In 2007 agreement was reached on six Italian police patrol boats that would feature Libyan guards on board (The Guardian, 2007), while another measure has been the setting up of so-called 'transit processing centres' in sensitive locations such as Lampedusa and Ceuta – arguably in violation of the Geneva Refugee Convention (Goldschmidt, 2006).



Lindh budget) was earmarked for the training of Libyan law enforcement and authorities to act against immigration, but this project was halted in 2011 as a result of the Libyan uprising (see Open Europe, 2011, p. 12).

The diversity of measures and the mix of state and EU-level initiatives make it hard to provide an overall sum of resources devoted to immigration controls, but what is clear is that a gradual change took place in EU foreign policy. Strikingly enough, however, little progress was made in terms of deeper cooperation between north and south, specifically in the form of readmission agreements. While several bilateral agreements have been in place<sup>140</sup>, no EU-wide readmission deals were concluded with Mediterranean partner states in the period under consideration. In 2006 the Commission said that talks with Morocco were “almost concluded” (European Commission, 2006b, p. 6), but in a later Communication it was said that after 15 rounds of negotiations had taken place there was “little prospect of a swift conclusion”, while planned negotiations with Algeria had not yet been opened (European Commission, 2011d). The main reasons that were identified for this situation were a lack of incentives provided by the EU and a lack of flexibility of certain member states. As for the former, we have seen in Chapter III that readmission involves ‘unbalanced reciprocity’, which is why third states typically require concessions in terms of visa facilitation and/or financial assistance in a ‘package deal’. Algerian President Bouteflika, for example, complained that “our civil society is fed up with the growing restrictions on the circulation of people ... We want to see a tangible loosening of our current shackles and more freedom of movement across our borders” (Magharebia, 2005). Khader cites Italian professor Giuseppe

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<sup>140</sup> For example, workers’ quotas were increased for Egypt after it agreed to readmit thousands of its nationals from Italy in 2004 and 2005 (Cuttitta, 2007, p. 8).

Sciortino to this effect: “Fortress Europe never really lifted its drawbridges” (2005, p. 90).

The problem was acknowledged by the Commission:

*[A]n enhanced ENP will ... require a very serious examination of how visa procedures can be made less of an obstacle to legitimate travel from neighbouring countries to the EU ... [T]his can only be addressed in the context of broader packages to address related issues such as cooperation on illegal immigration, ... efficient border management, readmissions agreements and effective return of illegal migrants. (European Commission, 2006b, p. 6)*

In summary: for the EU member states, in order to advance the ENP it was necessary to facilitate legitimate travel between the EU and the Med partners, and this incentive could be used to reach agreement on readmission agreements. This represents a rather complex interplay between various dynamics, in which eased visa regulations can be offered as a carrot to conclude a readmission agreement. A certain degree of deadlock has prevailed, however, and the Commission concluded that “there have so far only been small-scale offers which can hardly be regarded as incentives for making progress on readmission” (European Commission, 2011c). In addition, member states have demanded that the agreements include provisions on third country nationals, obliging partner states to take individuals back in irrespective of their nationality. For North African states that often serve as transit countries this makes an agreement altogether rather costly and unattractive. According to the Commission, if this demand had not been made, or if it was “underpinned with appropriate incentives”, negotiations with e.g. Morocco and Turkey “could have been concluded already” (ibid.).

Thus, whilst there has been a proliferation of initiatives, many of them were at the member state level or have not yet actually been implemented. In this regard it would go too far to state that Euro-Med relations were overshadowed by repressive practices, but it is true that a trend can be identified. As we have said, it is more difficult to link this trend to our independent variables as the focus on immigration can be seen as an intervening variable that impelled action on a more immediate basis. This is also the case for the anti-terror dimension of the ENP; for both fields it is difficult to explain the EU's actions in terms of a significant economic interest or a principled belief in human rights and democracy. The theoretical implications of this finding will be discussed below.

**Table 16: JHA in the ENP**

<b>EU problem definition</b>	Terrorist threat, migratory pressures, illegal immigration
<b>Policy Methods and Instruments</b>	Code of conduct, focus on policing and judiciary in MENA, readmission agreements (mostly repressive)
<b>Expected outcomes</b>	Prevent terrorist actions, reduce (illegal) immigration
<b>Evidence in support of hypothesis</b>	Evidence challenges hypothesis, no direct route to independent variables
<b>Challenges</b>	Difficulty to offer sufficient incentives for MENA partners → zero-sum interests
<b>Actual outcomes</b>	Code of conduct, enhanced bilateral cooperation on anti-terrorism, but failure on readmission agreements, little indication of immigration reduction

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<b>Conclusion</b>	Intervening variable leads to refinement of causal beliefs with short-term focus, but more limited connection to independent variables
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### ***Conclusion***

Our analysis of the causal beliefs in evidence in the plans for revising the EU's relations with the MENA, formulated at the critical juncture provided by enlargement and the Iraq War in 2003, indicates that a refinement of sorts took place. Based upon the explicitly stated dissatisfaction with the results of the EMP and the suggested modifications to the EU's approach, we have said that a learning process could be observed in which the previous gap between expectations and outcomes inspired a revised outlook. Whilst structural adjustment retained its primary position within the EU's causal beliefs, broader action was suggested to support the MENA partners in their efforts. Thus, the belief that economic reform and increased FDI alone would be sufficient for the Maghreb and Mashriq states to achieve welfare gains was nuanced, with more attention for EU support and action in the sphere of the first basket. What is more, the bilateral focus that was chosen followed the path of the enlargement process that had been successfully undertaken with the new member states. In this manner the causal beliefs formulated by the EU had their basis in the EMP's prior assumptions but refined particularly how they were operationalised.

Our second empirical test has required us to assess, in light of the available evidence, whether the identified causal beliefs did indeed provide a roadmap for the EU's actions towards the Mediterranean region. In two spheres of Euro-Med relations strong evidence was found to support this element of our hypothesis. In the sphere of the first basket we have seen how there was an increase in funding and prioritisation of measures pertaining to human rights and democracy, in line with the ENP's roadmap.

For the second basket (economics), efforts were undertaken to broaden the EU's approach towards a more supportive and active role to engage with MENA partners on reform. Enlargement instruments were made available whilst a broader set of incentives for economic liberalisation was put on the table. Across the first two baskets, therefore, a high degree of consistency between causal beliefs and actions has been observed, serving as strong hoop evidence in support of our hypothesis.

The third basket, which pertains to human affairs, has been interpreted as an addition to the EU's roadmap, stipulating additional tools with which to pursue the objectives of the ENP. However, it is important to be careful not to read back causal beliefs from observed actions, given that the result of reversing the analytical order in this fashion would be that the 'causal beliefs as roadmaps' element of our hypothesis could never be falsified. After all, if we assume that the EU based its policies on cause-effect calculations and proceed to infer what they may have been on the basis of observed actions, our conclusions would be speculative at best. Nevertheless, we must remain open to the potential of shifts in the EU's causal beliefs, even outside the space provided by critical junctures.

Closely related to the above is the fourth basket. One challenge we encountered in our investigation is that the increasing focus on JHA in the fourth basket seemed to fall outside the roadmap that was suggested by the EU's causal beliefs. Whilst the strengthened emphasis on repressive, short-term action resonated with the EU's earlier concerns about migratory pressures, the solution towards which the fourth basket verged was of a different nature than the iterated strategy of pursuing stability through increasing welfare in the south. Similar to how shifting causal beliefs were in evidence in the third basket, this could be interpreted as an additional learning process based upon the lack of tangible results in the EMP/ENP and the attendant continuance of

migratory pressures. This could be seen as an intervening variable in our hypothesised model, but given the slow pace of progress in this field it is important to consider further developments, which is why we will return to this topic in Chapter V.

Taking the aforementioned challenges into account, it is possible to say that there is relatively strong evidence in support of the ‘causal beliefs as roadmaps’ approach. There is evidence to suggest that a number of shifts occurred during the period considered in this chapter, many of them inspired by the successes of enlargement and the challenges of the EMP. For some of the other changes, pertaining to JHA and the increasing presence of exclusivist measures, we have pointed to the lack of success in the EMP, posing as an intervening variable. At this point it is possible to say, therefore, that there are certain implications for the wider validity of our hypothesis, as discussed below.

Our third test has required us to assess whether it is possible to trace a connection between principled beliefs and/or economic interests on the one hand, and causal beliefs and EU actions on the other hand. In particular, we ask whether the evidence supports the claim that our independent variables were *necessary* for explaining the observed policy dynamics. Another way to phrase the question would be to ask whether an explanation for the EU’s actions could be envisaged *without* our independent variables. Evidence in support of the necessary role of principled beliefs was found primarily in the first basket, which focuses explicitly on human rights and democracy. The evidence strongly points towards the conclusion that without an appreciation of the EU’s principled beliefs it would be very difficult to account for EU behaviour in the first basket. After all, we could posit counterfactually that if the EU had merely been interested in securing its borders or expanding economically there would have been no need to increase funding for human rights and democracy related

initiatives. That is to say: without its principled beliefs it is unlikely that the Union would have formulated the kind of problem definitions that we have identified.

In this light there is relatively strong hoop evidence in support of the hypothesis that principled beliefs are a necessary driver of the EU's MENA policies. However, it is also true that the strength of this conclusion is somewhat ameliorated by the challenges that have been observed. For example, in difficult cases like Tunisia the EU did not press the human rights issue, opting instead to prioritise other areas of cooperation. As a result it has remained difficult to find a true smoking gun example of the EU's commitment to human rights and democracy. The conclusion is that principled beliefs are a *necessary but not sufficient* variable to explain the EU's actions towards the Mediterranean. This was certainly the consensus amongst the persons interviewed for this thesis. All EU officials interviewed acknowledged the 'difficult' track-record of EU democracy and human rights promotion, but stressed the significant value of having such a policy.

With regards to our second independent variable, economic interests, we have found strong evidence to suggest a link with causal beliefs and EU behaviour in especially the second basket. EU actions were consistent with the hypothesised interest in market expansion, as efforts were strengthened to integrate northern and southern markets. Although this process was believed to generate welfare benefits for the MENA, the burden of reform fell primarily on the Med partners and there was very explicit linkage in EU statements between Euro-Mediterranean market integration and the EU's competitive strength. Altogether this gives us strong evidence in support of our hypothesis, but it must be added that the previously observed tension within the EU over the extent of market integration continued to hamper more far-going efforts. The Commission spoke of defensive and offensive interests in this regard, underlining the

importance of being sensitive to the more precise ways in which the EU defines its economic interests.

An interesting question that arises on the basis of our findings is whether the challenges for one independent variable could be explained with reference to the other, which would suggest a degree of interplay between the two drivers. In this vein we ought to ask whether the challenges to the promotion of human rights and democracy could be explained with reference to economic interests. The EU's prioritisation of the second basket and its reluctance to press relatively advanced reformers like Tunisia and Morocco on human rights and democracy suggests that this might indeed be the case. Whilst the EU's causal beliefs envisaged a harmonious confluence of the two dimensions, it can thus also be observed that the material dimension set boundaries for the extent to which principled beliefs were prioritised vis-à-vis MENA partners. Some analysts warned that "the EU's often-lauded 'democracy promotion lite'" was in danger of turning into "'democracy promotion liter and liter' and in some places even 'democracy promotion undetectable'" (Youngs, 2008a, p. 13; see also Youngs, 2008b). Our approach suggests that this could be explained with reference to the EU's economic interests, as a balance was sought between the two drivers; in general the second basket took precedence in case of conflicted priorities. When asked whether there was a degree of tension between economic interests and human rights, our interviewees appeared more reluctant to speak but admitted difficulties. Not all agreed on the extent to which problems existed, with some pointing chiefly towards external problems (Interview with EEAS Official, 6 June 2014, telephone) and others looking more inward (Interview with EEAS Official, 3 June 2014, telephone). However, it was widely stressed that the need to resolve this kind of tension was one of the lessons of the Arab Spring (this will be discussed in our final conclusions).



Vice-versa, it is somewhat more difficult to explain the challenges to the EU's pursuit of economic gains with reference to principled beliefs. The fact that the EU did not succeed in e.g. putting together a convincing set of incentives for services liberalisation did not seem to be related to human rights or democracy, pertaining instead to intra-EU disagreements as discussed previously. It could perhaps be argued that the EU did not seek a more explicitly exploitative relationship with the south on the basis of its principled beliefs, but given the disagreements within the EU it is questionable whether it had the ability to do so even if there was a desire for 'neo-colonial exploitation'. In a very broad sense, however, it is possible to say that the EU has clearly strived not to violate its human rights and democracy principles, even though it did not always take purposive action to promote them. On this basis we can conclude that a degree of interplay between our independent variables could be observed, with each setting broad limits for the range of EU behaviour considered to be desirable or acceptable.

Where do these findings leave us with regards to our final test, which asks whether principled beliefs and economic interests provide us with a sufficient explanation for the EU's policies towards the Mediterranean? This is a stronger claim than arguing that our independent variables are 'necessary but not sufficient', which is why we expect to be able to provide straw in the wind evidence in the best scenario. The key challenge to our hypothesis can be found in the relative rise of JHA-related activities within the ENP. On the one hand it can be said that the rationale underpinning them was chiefly security-driven, and hence it is more difficult to trace a link to economic interests or (especially) principled beliefs. Of course it is possible to conceptualise security as a scarce good and to argue that anti-immigration measures were rooted in a drive to retain possession over zero-sum goods, but this would be

stretching our definition of economic interests further than how it was originally intended. Yet on the other hand, in an absolute sense both funding and action pertaining to JHA remained limited – their relative rise owing primarily to the fact that under the EMP there had been little collective action in this field at all. The straw in the wind evidence in support of our overall hypothesis thus consists of the finding that the broad outlines of the ENP can indeed be explained with reference to an interplay between economic interests and principled beliefs. Yet the more we zoom in, the more additional variables appear to be necessary to account for EU behaviour. Chapter VI will have more to say on this topic.

A final question to be addressed here is how our reading of the ENP can be situated within the wider literature. First of all, it has been relatively widely stressed that the ENP was inspired by enlargement (Kelley, 2006, p. 30; Bechev & Nicolaïdis, 2010). If we consider Javier Solana's assertion that enlargement has been the most values-driven, original and successful strategy in the history of IR (Solana, 2006, p. 2), it is possible to see how the ENP initiative could be interpreted through a normative lens (Adler & Crawford, 2006; Adler & Crawford, 2004; Attinà, 2006; Kelley, 2006; Börzel & Risse, 2005). Our main critique of such a perspective is that it takes the EU's principled beliefs as a (somewhat) sufficient explanation, but this misses out on several concurrent dynamics best accounted for with reference to material variables. What is more, the emphasis placed on the normative dimension seems out of sync with the actual balance in EU policy, which highlights economics to an extent not easily reconcilable with the normative perspective. In addition, the EU's actions with regards to human affairs have been taken by some as evidence for a focus on processes of socialisation through deep cooperation with partners on a relatively equiponderant basis of mutual respect (Nicolaïdis & Nicolaïdis, 2004). However, the causal logic in

evidence in relevant EU statements indicates a more explicitly instrumentalist operationalisation of the third basket than what is allowed for within such a framework. And if we put decentralised cooperation in perspective, it is clear that in terms of funding or overall priority it was only a minor aspect of Euro-Med relations. This means that granting theoretical primacy to this element over others would somewhat misrepresent the empirical balance of facts. Since our approach is more open to the overall balance between concurrent dynamics in foreign policy, it avoids falling into this trap.

From a different perspective, certain authors have focused on the relative power dimension. Here the argument has been that the ENP signalled the EU's acknowledgement of unequal power relations and a willingness to pursue European interests (Del Sarto & Schumacher, 2005, pp. 27-28). The more Euro-centric aspects of EU foreign policy were highlighted by e.g. Jan Zielonka, who suggested that both the ENP and enlargement implied a process of "economic and political domination" (2008, p. 475). Others still have posited that the ENP sent a "strong signal that the EU is trying to consolidate its position as a regional power" (Balfour & Rotta, 2005, p. 19). These views resonate with our findings to an important extent, even though it could be said that many of these elements were already present in the EMP. What is missing, however, is a deeper appreciation of the EU's concrete enactment of its intended policies and what challenges it experienced in this process. Here our approach offers relative benefits, as the process tracing methodology allows for a very clear understanding of intended and actual causal chains in foreign policy. What is more, even at the relatively 'high' level of analysis adopted by Zielonka there is not a

significant degree of evidence to suggest EU ‘domination’ over the MENA.<sup>141</sup> It is undoubtedly true that in certain spheres the EU has been able to virtually impose its will upon the south (e.g. regulatory reform), but the fact that so many challenges and problems remained tells us that there was certainly no politico-economic domination in a truly hegemonic manner. Thus, even though we have presented straw in the wind rather than hoop or smoking gun evidence in support of our hypothesis and have encountered several challenges, it can certainly be argued that our approach offers comparative benefits through its nuanced outlook and its sensitivity to the real-world dynamics of foreign policy.

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<sup>141</sup> The Times’ headline upon the launch of the ENP that *Brussels Plans to Expand its Empire Again* could thus also be said to have somewhat overstated its argument (2004).

## The Union for the Mediterranean

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In this chapter we examine the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) for the period 2008-2010. Launched by French President Nicholas Sarkozy on 13 July 2008, the UfM is the most recent major EU policy initiative for the MENA and represents the final case study considered in this thesis. As in the previous empirical chapters, we will trace the key processes of the UfM in order to address the four questions/tests that were formulated in Chapter II. This will allow us to gain further insight into the strengths of our approach – which posits that it is best to investigate material and ideational variables jointly to account for EFP – and it will substantiate our conclusions with a comprehensive evidential basis.

At the outset, what is important to note about the Union for the Mediterranean is that it was not, like the Barcelona Process and the European Neighbourhood Policy, conceived as a comprehensive framework to deal with a multiplicity of relevant aspects of Euro-Med relations. Compared to the other two frameworks the UfM appears as limited in both scope and funding, focusing on a number of more functional fields of cooperation. “Effectively”, writes one observer, “the UfM has carved out a sub-section of the [EMP and ENP] for enhanced emphasis” (Hunt, 2011, p. 178). Despite its limited breadth, however, the UfM is of key importance for this thesis. As we argue below, what can be gained from investigating the UfM is a further insight into the evolution of some of the EU’s causal beliefs vis-à-vis the MENA, which has important implications for our assessment of material and ideational variables. We have said in Chapter IV that developments in particularly the third and fourth baskets suggested potential shifts in

the EU's causal beliefs towards a more short-term approach, but we have also highlighted the dangers of interpreting causal beliefs on the basis of observed actions. The UfM provides an opportunity to reinvestigate this point and thereby to critically assess our hypothesis that economic interests and human rights/democracy were the key drivers of EFP towards the south.

We begin by tracing the processes that led to the formulation and initiation of the UfM, focusing on its beginnings in French domestic politics and the programme's subsequent uploading to the European level. This serves to answer our first question, which seeks to define the EU's causal beliefs as evinced in key documents and statements. Our findings support what was proposed in Chapter IV, namely that a moderate shift took place in which the generally long-term, reformative political and economic ambitions of the EMP and ENP were supplemented with a focus on short-term objectives. What this indicates, we argue, is a reduced level of faith in the benefits of economic and political reform, as previously expressed in particularly the Euro-Med Partnership. In turn, this suggests that the EU moved in part from a full-fledged strategy for Euro-Med relations towards a more ad-hoc stance. Whilst it must be taken into account that the UfM was a supplement rather than a substitute, it is nevertheless a significant change in the EU's approach towards the Maghreb and the Mashreq, reflective of a deeper crisis that existed in this field.

The implications of these shifts become apparent in this chapter's second section, which seeks to undertake our second and third tests. To do so we investigate two respective key elements of the UfM, beginning with its intention to serve as an intergovernmental regional forum. Here we focus particularly on the role of principled beliefs, given the political nature of human rights/democracy and the potential to bring up related concerns in direct contacts with MENA leaders through 'leverage' (Lavenex

& Schimmelfennig, 2011). As we will see, the political agenda was dominated mainly by Arab-Israeli tensions. Notwithstanding the resultant lack of progress within the UfM, we conclude that the evidence does not support the hypothesis that principled beliefs were a necessary variable to account for the observed actions.

This raises the question: what of economic interests? To find an answer to this query we look at the UfM's projects as well as its funding, which are taken to represent the material side of the new framework. The major challenge here consists of the fact that to date few projects have been initiated or completed, as a result of which our empirical basis is somewhat narrower than was the case in our previous chapters. With this in mind, we find some evidence to link the UfM's projects to EU economic goals, but given the observed lack of interest from the EU's member states the UfM does not seem to evince a strong drive towards the pursuit of shared economic interests. For this reason, we conclude that our hypothesis falls short of explaining the UfM satisfactorily. The cause of this state of affairs, we suggest, lies with the fact that no comprehensive set of causal beliefs had been found to deal with the failures of the EU's earlier efforts, putting the pursuit of shared strategic goals – ideational or material – beyond the reach of the UfM.

In this chapter's conclusions we discuss how the UfM represents the most substantial challenge to our hypothesis, given that neither a clear economically expansionist policy nor a strongly principled stance could be detected. As we will explain, our most significant finding in this chapter pertains to the wider symbolism of the UfM for the EU's Mediterranean relations, signalling as it does the gradual abandonment of the strategy that had driven Europe's policies since at least 1995. In light of the previous chapters and the UfM's limited role this leaves intact the necessity of our independent variables, but it does affect their sufficiency for explaining Euro-

Med relations. Whilst our approach provides a highly useful way to understand the EU's trajectory, it is applicable to a lesser extent to the crisis observed in Euro-Mediterranean relations since 2008. In this light we conclude the chapter by addressing our fourth empirical test and situating our findings vis-à-vis the relevant academic literature.

### **From 'Union Méditerranée' to 'Barcelona Process: UfM'**

The dynamics that led to the launch of the UfM are best understood as a two-stage process. In this section we investigate the two subsequent stages so as to be able to answer our question regarding the EU's causal beliefs.

The first stage is characterised by leadership and activism of the then French President Nicholas Sarkozy. Outside the purview of the EU institutions (see below), he envisaged a cooperative union across the Mediterranean that would be distinct from the EMP. Notably, at this point the plans were still quite ambiguous, and the initiative did not evince an explicit set of causal beliefs for Euro-Mediterranean relations. This means that in and of itself the first stage of the UfM's development holds relatively limited relevance for our hypothesis, but it is nonetheless important to gain an understanding of the UfM's origins, as a careful tracing of the relevant processes enables us to understand how the idea was progressively reimagined and made commensurable with existing EU efforts.

Thus, as we will see in the second part of this section, due to a variety of reasons the plans were uploaded to the European Union level. At this stage the European Commission recast the UfM as an addition to the existing Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. It is at this point that we are able to identify a number of problem definitions underpinning the UfM, enabling us to appreciate the nature of the program's envisaged cause-effect relationships. In this light we find that what is notable is that the



new programme was initiated in a manner that was different from the EMP and ENP, as it did not come at a substantial critical juncture like the other programmes. For this reason it was not as innovative as the EMP/ENP had been, but we do note that the UfM did provide the opportunity to realign EU policy vis-à-vis certain fissures in the existing frameworks, particularly by downscaling the EU's reformative and integrative ambitions in the Maghreb and Mashriq. We argue that in this manner, despite its limited breadth and budgetary insecurity, the UfM was symbolic for wider dynamics within the EU's approach towards the Mediterranean, representing a crisis that existed in light of the ineffectiveness of existing policy frameworks.

### **The 'Union Méditerranée'**

Though proposals for a *Communauté du Monde Méditerranéen* had already been made in 2005 (Roumenotis & Guigou, 2005), the concrete starting point for the initiative lay with a campaign promise made by French presidential hopeful Nicholas Sarkozy to facilitate rapprochement and to create a 'Mediterranean Union' involving the littoral states on both sides of the Mediterranean (excluding northern EU member states). Sarkozy subsequently referred to the *Union Méditerranée* in his electoral victory speech: "we have to overcome all kinds of hatred to pave the way for a great dream of peace and a great dream of civilization ... the time has come to build together a Mediterranean union that will form a link between Europe and Africa. What was done for the union of Europe 60 years ago, we are going to do today for the union of the Mediterranean" (BBC, 2007). Little clarity was offered on the specifics of the plan (which the French press satirically dubbed 'Club Med' after a well-known chain of holiday resorts), but it was said to involve a number of concrete projects (e.g. on the environment, terrorism and/or migration), a Mediterranean Council, and an investment bank (Der Spiegel, 2008a; Balfour & Schmid, 2008). The original idea was to undertake

this new endeavour separately from the Barcelona Process. As Henri Guaino, political advisor to President Sarkozy, had said, it would be “neither against Barcelona nor for it, it has a different kind of focus on it” (cited in Aliboni et. al., 2008, p. 11). This left undefined what the relationship of the *Union Méditerranée* would be to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the European Neighbourhood Policy, as it was at this point primarily a unilateral French initiative rather than a *European* idea. This impression was strengthened by the fact that Sarkozy promoted it through a series of speeches in Arab capitals in which defence and nuclear technology exports as well as French involvement in infrastructural projects were mentioned (Gillespie, 2011, p. 1210). Against this backdrop it can be said that the early plans were fairly ambiguous; as a result it is possible to envision various (non-mutually exclusive) explanations of what Sarkozy was aiming to achieve.<sup>142</sup> A common denominator, however, was the centrality of France and the sidelining of the European Union.

Cooperation with other Mediterranean EU member states was necessary for Sarkozy given the regional focus of the plan. Yet the purely *Mediterranean* (rather than *Euro-Mediterranean*) orientation was feared mainly by Spain to overshadow and counteract against its previous efforts to promote a common EU policy towards the MENA (see Gillespie, 2008). Some suggested early on that excluding the Commission

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<sup>142</sup> This includes the domestically-oriented goal of placating French citizens of North African descent; renovating France’s *politique arabe*; increasing French influence vis-à-vis Germany as well as in the Maghreb and Mashriq; creating a substitute for Turkish EU membership (which Sarkozy opposed); increasing French commercial leadership in the south; and/or responding to the disappointments of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (see Gillespie, 2008, pp. 278-279). Elsewhere the idea was simply described as “an idea intended to bestow some foreign policy gravitas” on his campaign (Der Spiegel, 2008b). Another interpretation was that France tried to revitalise its *politique arabe*. Its policy in this regard was often described as relatively unique and different from the United States: “La France est la seule grande puissance qui a une politique arabe; c’est à dire qui considère le monde arabe comme un partenaire important et privilégié” (Saint-Prot, 2008, p. 3).

and northern member states would weaken ‘the Union’ (see Institut de la Méditerranée, 2007). Slovenia, holding the EU Presidency before France was due to take over, complained about being overshadowed (EU Observer, 2008). Key actors Italy and Spain accordingly endeavoured to ‘rein in’ the plan and to ensure its consistency with existing Euro-Mediterranean programmes. The product of these efforts was the *Appel de Rome*, issued after a trilateral meeting that was held in Rome on 20 December 2007. The name ‘Union for the Mediterranean’ was now adopted, and it was clarified that the approach would be founded on concrete projects of common interest (the substance of which would be decided later on).<sup>143</sup> This signified what has been called a functionalist interpretation of foreign policy, in which mostly technical, lower-level projects were to serve as the foundation for cooperation (Interviews with EEAS Official, 2, 3 & 16 June 2014, telephone; see also Holden, 2011).

What is notable about the plans at this point is that, in contrast to the EMP/ENP, they were driven less by an explicitly formulated set of ideas regarding prominent problems in the MENA and the solutions that could be promoted by external actors to help resolve them (e.g. help with structural adjustment). Another key difference lay in the fact that the issue-specific approach that was suggested lacked the reformative dimension that had been characteristic of earlier initiatives. But could this be interpreted as a ‘break’ with the past? In other words: what would the UfM’s relationship with the EMP and ENP be? In this respect a greater degree of complementarity was allowed for than in Sarkozy’s original plan: the UfM was to be ‘supplementary’ to existing frameworks, serving not to replace but to ‘complete’ them (*Appel de Rome*, 2007). This left in the middle exactly in what way the initiative would be organised vis-à-vis existing frameworks and where its added value would lie. An important hint was given

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<sup>143</sup> See [<http://www.voltairenet.org/L-Appel-de-Rome-pour-l-Union-pour>], accessed 22 February 2012.

with the following remarks: “The Union for the Mediterranean is destined to be the heart and engine of cooperation in the Mediterranean and for the Mediterranean ... The Union should be based on the principle of *cooperation rather than integration*” (ibid., emphasis added). The implication of this phrasing is twofold: 1) the statement connotes that rather than being merely supplementary the UfM was envisioned as overtaking the EMP as the ‘heart’ of cooperation; 2) again, ‘cooperation rather than integration’ implied clearly more of an intergovernmental and less of a reformative basis of interaction, eschewing the integrationist aims of the EMP and the ENP.

However, there was still little specificity in the plan. The trilateral statement called for a meeting in Paris on 13 July between the riparian states, just before an EMP meeting on 14 July with all the EU member states, in order to further determine the principles and structures of the Union for the Mediterranean. Notably, in light of this obvious pre-emption of the EMP meeting as well as the sidelining of the EU there was a significant degree of northern European scepticism. Particularly explicit was the critique expressed by Germany’s Angela Merkel, who had earlier commented that separate initiatives could lead to a “corrosion of the EU in its core area” and release “explosive forces in the EU” (Der Spiegel, 2007). This was an unusually harsh formulation, and some suspected in Germany that Sarkozy was attempting to establish a second-tier EU led by France and to spend EU monies on a non-inclusive project (see Schumacher, 2011; Schmid, 2008). It was suggested in the German press that shared European interests lay at the basis of Merkel’s opposition, particularly the commonality of concerns over e.g. illegal immigration and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which was contrasted with France’s purely national concerns (Der Spiegel, 2008c). Others suggested that a deeper motivation was the German desire to maintain an influential role

in shaping European foreign policy and to prevent France from becoming *primus inter pares* (see e.g. Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2008).

In our view, these analyses should be treated as hypotheses to be tested, but for the current thesis this would go beyond the scope of our research aims. What we aim to find out in this place is what causal beliefs were in evidence in the plans for the UfM, but given the ambiguity of the initiatives as they existed at this stage the key indication lies with the more general suggestion of a ‘functionalist’ programme. Notably, this lacked (a connection to) the more ambitious reformative elements of the EMP and ENP, suggesting an underlying set of causal beliefs that was focused more on the short-term. We will now move to the second stage of the UfM’s development, where we will be able to gain further clarity on these matters.

### **The Commission Takes Charge**

On the basis of its extra-EU beginnings, the UfM was gradually brought into the fold of existing EU efforts through pressure from the member states. This culminated in an agreement on 3 March 2008, when it was decided that all 27 member states would be involved. Accordingly, the Mediterranean summit that was supposed to be held before the EMP meeting was rescheduled to include all EU members. Confirming the reformulation of the initiative was the Franco-German presentation of the UfM at the European Council of 13-14 March, where it was aligned with the EMP and recast as ‘Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean’. The Commission was charged with outlining further specifics (European Council, 2008a, Annex I; see also European Council 2008b).

What is notable is that, until this point, little evidence can be found of considerations regarding the needs of the Mediterranean partners or the strategy that would best serve to further shared European objectives in the region. Yet this does not

mean that there were no conceptual shifts at all – we can chiefly point to the more functionalist and intergovernmental basis of the UfM. What was largely lacking, however, was a clear, purposive drive. In contrast to the EMP and ENP, it is difficult to characterise the circumstances that led to the formulation of the UfM as a critical juncture, given that there were no equivalents to the substantial circumstantial changes that had accompanied the other two programmes. Thus, the UfM was not designed to replace the existing frameworks, but rather served to add something to them.

If the programme's beginnings lay with political struggles between the member states, it can also be seen that the window of opportunity created by these debates was utilised by the Commission to address (or rather, sidestep) problems in extant EU policies. Evidence for this analysis can be found in a variety of statements from the European Commission and individuals closely involved with the process. Following the Council's referral, the Commission reformulated the UfM as a response to "the shortcomings and difficulties" of the Barcelona Process, describing it as "a new political and practical impetus into the process" (European Commission, 2008c, §3-4). The strategic importance of the Mediterranean region for the EU was restated by the Commission (*ibid.*, §5) and it was said that the EMP:

*[R]epresents a strong commitment to regional stability and democracy through regional cooperation and integration, and aims to build on that consensus to pursue the path to political and socio-economic reform and modernisation. However, the persistence of the conflict in the Middle East has challenged and stretched the Partnership to the limit of its abilities to preserve the channels of dialogue among all partners. (§6)*

In this manner the UfM was explicitly reformulated as a response to the limitations of the EMP. It was emphasised that “further and faster reforms are needed if the EU's Mediterranean partners are to reap the potential benefits of globalisation and free trade with the EU and regional integration”, while it was admitted that progress in the Barcelona Process had been “slower than expected” (§11). The Commission also argued that “the formula of trade plus investment plus cooperation” remained pertinent (§11) and that the priority was still for the Mediterranean partners to alter their domestic structures in order to reflect the EMP and ENP's ambitions. Finally, it was conceded that the Union itself could do more and that “qualitative and quantitative change” was needed (§12). Whilst the earlier set of formative causal beliefs (whose main characteristic was the idea that a range of reforms was needed to promote socio-economic progress in the MENA) was reiterated, the functionalist approach also suggested that a ‘second-best option’ ought to be explored in parallel to the EMP and ENP.

The EU's earlier causal beliefs thus were not explicitly abandoned, yet it could not be denied that the expectations that had underpinned the EMP/ENP had not materialised. A clearer distinction between short-term and long-term goals was drawn in light of the lack of results. Accordingly the UfM set the bar substantially lower, evincing a reduced level of faith in the (immediate) benefits of reform in the south or the EU's ability to stimulate progress. As the Commission said, its Communication on the UfM “takes stock of the achievements of the Barcelona Process and envisages the new initiative to build on and reinforce these successes, while also acknowledging the shortcomings that have compromised more rapid development” (European Commission, 2008d). In this light the ‘added value’ of the initiative was envisioned as strengthening the multilateral dimension of Euro-Med relations, improving the partner states’ sense of

co-ownership, and boosting the visibility of the Barcelona Process (ibid.).<sup>144</sup> It could be said that these were primarily peripheral matters to the existing frameworks, with a much lower level of ambition than e.g. the construction of a free trade zone. In addition, it is unclear how the UfM would help overcome some of the problematics explored in Chapters III and IV, which had to do much more with internal European disagreements than with a lack of co-ownership or the visibility of the EMP.

The Commission suggested to build the UfM upon practical projects of high visibility, thus retaining one of the core elements of Sarkozy's initial plan, along with a political 'upgrade' through biennial summits of the heads of state and government under a system of co-Presidency. Sarkozy's earlier vision of an investment bank was forfeited, however, which is perhaps not surprising in light of the controversies surrounding this concept (see the relevant sections in Chapters III and IV). In addition, improved institutional support was foreseen through the creation of a Joint Permanent Committee and a UfM Secretariat, but no conclusion was reached on funding (EU funds were, after all, locked until 2013). The Commission's proposal was supported by the Council in June, where the UfM's status as a supplement to the Barcelona Process was reconfirmed (European Council, 2008b).

It is worth discussing some of the further implications of the contours of the UfM as it was now taking shape, particularly the idea of initiating practical joint projects. The Commission suggested four areas of cooperation, namely infrastructure; de-pollution of the Mediterranean Sea and environmental governance; civil protection; and solar energy (European Commission, 2008c, Annex I). Building on ongoing efforts under MEDA/ENPI (see Chapter IV and Hunt, 2011), these were evidently more

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<sup>144</sup> Notably, non-EMP states Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Monaco were also included (they were said to have accepted the EMP *acquis*).



pragmatic areas of cooperation in which potential common interests could be identified, but at the same time it was difficult to detect the presence of the EMP's *acquis* – with attention for ideational dynamics like democracy, human rights and good governance – in working together on projects in these spheres. Even though the UfM was meant to be only one element of the wider constellation of Euro-Med politics, the complete absence of these topics appears to counteract the ‘mainstreaming’ of ideational concerns that had been attempted previously.

This state of affairs was brought to attention by European Parliament. It stated that despite the EMP's “insufficient achievements”, there is “potential which should be optimised” (2008, D). It added that the Council and Commission should “clearly enshrine the promotion of human rights and democracy in the objectives of this new initiative” (ibid., §17). This was necessary given that “one of the main goals of Euro-Mediterranean policy is to promote the rule of law, democracy, respect for human rights and political pluralism”, but the EMP “has not yet produced the expected results in the area of human rights” (ibid., §17). Subsequently the EP warned that “the initiative of the Union for the Mediterranean launched by the French Presidency ... must not lead to less attention and priority being given to the promotion of the necessary reforms in respect of democracy and human rights in the region” (European Parliament, 2009b, §109). In other words, the European Parliament was worried that the UfM's pragmatic focus would distract from the much more challenging field of political reform. Given the lack of reformative ambitions this seems a legitimate concern; whether or not it materialised is of importance for our hypothesis and will be considered in the following section of this chapter. For now, it is notable that the ideational dimension was mostly lacking in the UfM.

After it was approved by the European Council, the Commission's proposal served as the blueprint for the EU's position at the Euro-Mediterranean summit of 13 July 2008. Held on the eve of Bastille Day, the gathering of European and Mediterranean heads of state in the Grand Palais (boycotted only by Libya's Qadhafi) was described as a diplomatic success for President Sarkozy. In his speech he said that "instead of continuing to hate and wage war" it was now time to "build peace in the Mediterranean together" (The Guardian, 2008). A Joint Declaration was issued at the summit, titled *A Strategic Ambition for the Mediterranean* (Union for the Mediterranean, 2008a). This declaration, which was to serve as the roadmap for the UfM, contained much of the language and structure of the Commission's earlier Communication. The goal was thus said to be to "increase co-ownership of the [Barcelona] process, set governance on the basis of equal footing and translate it into concrete projects, more visible to citizens" (ibid., §9). Exactly as suggested by the Commission, biennial summits for the heads of state and government were agreed upon, meant to set in motion regional projects in accordance with a two-year work programme. In addition to the four areas for collective projects originally outlined by the Commission, two more were mentioned: higher education and support for SMEs. The creation of a co-Presidency was further confirmed (consisting of the EU's external representative and an elected Mediterranean co-president<sup>145</sup>) along with the principle of a Secretariat (to manage and implement the projects) and a Permanent Committee based

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<sup>145</sup> A small row between France and the Czech Republic (who was due to take over the EU Presidency from France) emerged over this point. Eventually it was decided that France would stay on as UfM co-President for two years alongside the Czech EU Presidency. On the southern side Egypt was chosen as co-President. The confusion regarding the northern co-Presidency persisted until the EU's High Representative for foreign affairs, the Commission (sometimes together with the EU Presidency), and the External Action Service took over from France since March 2012 for foreign ministers meetings, sectoral meetings, and senior official meetings (see European Council, 2012).

in Brussels. Overall, the UfM was said to “build on the acquis and reinforce the achievements and successful elements of the Barcelona Process” (ibid., §2). On balance, however, short-term gains such as making Euro-Med “relations more concrete and visible” through projects that are “relevant for the citizens of the region” come forward as the primary goals (European Commission, 2009b).

In sum, whilst the UfM did not openly dismiss the causal beliefs underpinning the EMP and ENP, it did signal a reduced level of faith in the potential of the EU to stimulate growth and progress in the south at the level envisioned in the EMP/ENP. This is illustrated by the following comments, made by former Spanish Minister and Speaker of the Euro-Med Parliamentary Assembly Josep Borrell:

*Our declared goal of strengthening the foundations of political change was clearly not met, and I now believe that the lesson to be learnt from this disappointing outcome is that the EU’s Mediterranean policy focus should be more modest, setting our sights a bit lower instead of striving for over-ambitious goals ... The experience gained from the Barcelona Process warns us that unrealistic aims like the idea of a major Mediterranean free-trade area must be avoided. Instead, the focus should be on providing a more general framework that concentrates on specific projects like the fight against pollution, energy policy, migration and agriculture. This is to some extent what has now been done with [the UfM]... (Borrell, 2010, emphasis added).*

Once again, this could be viewed as an indication that the UfM was a type of ‘second-best option’ to what had been tried in the EMP and ENP. It did not contain as clearly a defined set of causal beliefs as its predecessors, but it is nevertheless possible to surmise

the nature of the EU's evolving expectations on the basis of the evidence considered. This is especially true when we connect the UfM to what has been witnessed in the previous chapter, where we noted a gradual increase in activities that were relatively distant to the original approach of the EMP/ENP. From our theoretical perspective the main difference between the UfM and its predecessors can thus be found in the causal beliefs underpinning the programme, pointing to the fact that it was much more pragmatic or functionalist, lacking a strategic, integrative perspective. As discussed in Chapter IV, moves towards such a stance could be observed within certain elements of the ENP, and for this reason the UfM can be regarded as symptomatic for certain shifts within EU's Mediterranean policies.

**Table 17: The UfM's Causal Beliefs**

<b>Problem Analysis</b>	Lack of overall progress in EMP/ENP; previous goals too ambitious and failure of regional collaborative initiatives
<b>Action Needed</b>	Focus on concrete areas of common interest, intergovernmental cooperation (rather than integration)
<b>Operationalisation</b>	Designation of six areas for collective projects, creation of co-Presidency and UfM Secretariat
<b>Anticipated outcomes</b>	Ambiguous, but includes progress on concrete issues and visible short-term gains on a small scale

As the above table suggests, the UfM, as it was launched in Paris, was notable almost as much for what was said as for the questions that were raised. One of the biggest unknowns was that of funding, given that the EU itself could not devote significantly increased funds to the MENA within its ongoing budget. It was therefore argued that the

UfM should mobilise additional funding from e.g. the participating states, the private sector, FEMIP and the international financial institutions (Union for the Mediterranean, 2008a, §31). This exposed the initiative to a substantial degree of contingency, and this vulnerability was worsened by the lack of clear strategic guidelines. As one Egyptian official complained, the “UfM is just another layer of changes in the EU policy which just adds vagueness and complexity” and which “remains vague in terms of objectives, means of implementation and funding (cited in Ghoneim, 2009, p. 95). The Committee of the Regions noted this aspect as well and remarked that the UfM “makes no changes whatsoever to the programming or financial aspects of the Mediterranean dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy” (Committee of the Regions, 2008b, §15). For this reason as well as the fact that it remained a work in progress we must at this point remain cautious in terms of the wider significance attributed to the changes signalled by the UfM. Deeper investigation into how the UfM was implemented will help us to further appreciate its significance and meaning for our hypothesis.

### ***Implementing the UfM***

As we have seen, the Union for the Mediterranean lacked much of the drive and clarity that had existed for the EMP and ENP. Yet in some ways it would be unfair to compare the three programmes in a direct manner, since given its supplemental nature as well as the absence of significant funding the UfM’s wider significance was determined to be limited from the outset. Nevertheless, the new programme provides some useful information for testing our hypothesis as it strengthens the impression that the EU’s policies were partially being reoriented towards a short-term outlook. This also raises a challenge, for if it is really true that the EU moved towards such a stance the importance of our independent variables as drivers of the EU’s policies towards the Mediterranean

would be more difficult to trace. In this section we investigate to what extent this was the case by undertaking our second and third tests.

In the previous chapters we have chosen for a sectoral division, following the different ‘baskets’ of the EMP and ENP. Since the UfM was not ordered in such a manner this would not be a useful way to structure the current section. Instead, a better way to set up our analysis is to focus on the two types of actions prescribed in the UfM’s founding documents: intergovernmental collaboration (through the co-Presidency system) and the common projects (backed up by the Secretariat). Therefore, in order to assess the available evidence as to whether support can be found for our hypothesis, in the current section we will discuss the UfM’s actualisation since 2008 in terms of its two main pillars. Specifically, we aim to find out whether causal beliefs provided a roadmap for policy and to what extent material and ideational variables were the determinants of this process.

We begin with the intergovernmental dimension of the UfM, which is drawn upon to test the human rights/democracy element of our hypothesis. The idea was to work with incumbent regimes collectively and thereby to strengthen the regional aspects of the EMP, which had previously been gradually ignored due to the difficult circumstances in the region. Similar problems were experienced in the UfM, and in the context of a lack of progress and a series of intervening events little evidence is found in support of the notion that principled beliefs were necessary to explain the observed behaviour. We point to several sources of tension and contradiction in EU policy during this period, the implications of which for our hypothesis will become clear over the course of this chapter.

Secondly we investigate the UfM’s projects and funding. Processes in this sphere have the potential to tell us primarily about the material side of EFP. Whilst we

find some evidence to support our hypothesis, its significance is somewhat compromised by the lack of successful projects and the absence of strong interest from the EU member states. Altogether this indicates a state of crisis within the UfM, but it also represents a challenge to our approach. This will be discussed in the present chapter's conclusions as well as in Chapter VI.

### **The UfM and Human Rights/Democracy**

One of the problems that had existed with the Barcelona Process was the fact that it was often viewed as an EU-led project. As one observer said, the Mediterranean partners were primarily 'guests' in a house that was owned by the EU; this was most clearly exemplified by the concluding statements to the EMP meetings in which the EU Presidency often included "items which were not truly shared by all members but towards which the house guests showed acquiescence, condescension or complacency" (Aliboni, 2009, p. 2). Therefore, by enhancing the regional nature of Euro-Med relations and giving the MENA partners a greater role it could be possible to boost their sense of ownership and thereby to increase their willingness to collaborate with the EU across the board. As seen in the previous section, this was the (ambiguously defined) causal belief underpinning the idea of a co-Presidency. With regards to our independent variables, it is notable that promotion of the human right/democracy agenda via leverage seems less suited for this format given the resistance to change to be expected from the MENA states. As *Al Jazeera* (2008) wrote after the meeting in Paris:

*[A]way from the bonhomie ... stood a very inconvenient truth. Al-Assad, Olmert and Hosni Mubarak, president of Egypt and a co-chair of the summit, do actually have something in common. All in various and different ways, suppress human rights, sometimes violently.*

This raises an important question, for what were the implications of the UfM for the role of principled beliefs in EU policy towards the MENA?

Answering this question requires us to carefully trace events since the start of the programme. After the Paris summit, specification of the UfM continued as there was still a significant degree of ambiguity. Problems were encountered when the Arab states insisted on the involvement of the Arab League. Israel was firmly opposed to this since it feared that it might strengthen a common front that would be critical of its policies (UK House of Commons, 2009).<sup>146</sup> Disagreement over the issue led to a suspension of meetings – Benita Ferrero-Waldner referred to this as “early teething problems” (Ferrero-Waldner, 2008) – until the Foreign Ministers met in Marseilles (3-4 November 2008). In a diplomatic *quid pro quo* Israel dropped its objections in exchange for an agreement that one of the UfM Secretariat’s five deputy secretary-general posts would go to Israel (AFP, 2008).<sup>147</sup> Moreover, there was another name change (back to ‘Union for the Mediterranean’, thus dropping the ‘Barcelona Process’) and it was decided to seat the Secretariat in Barcelona (Union for the Mediterranean, 2008b).<sup>148</sup> The

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<sup>146</sup> As Aliboni had written: “The intergovernmental nature of the UfM is destined to reflect the conflictual situation in the Middle-East without any filter whatsoever” (2009, p. 3). See also Johansson-Nogués (2011).

<sup>147</sup> The very fact that it was Israel deciding on the Arab League’s inclusion was said to be a further source of frustration in itself. As *Al-Ahram* reported: “For Cairo it is particularly embarrassing that the participation of the Arab League should be decided by Israel when Egypt, the host of the headquarters of the Arab organisation, is co-chairing the [UfM]” (2008).

<sup>148</sup> Regarding the change of name, the European Parliament argued that “this name would help highlight the joint nature of the partnership” but highlighted the necessity to reconfirm “the policies which the EU is already developing with its Mediterranean partners” in light of the “strategic value of Euro-Mediterranean relations and the Barcelona Process acquis” (European Parliament, 2010b, §3).



Secretariat's statutes, funding and mandate were not settled yet, though it was agreed that there would be a southern Mediterranean Secretary General.

With regards to principled beliefs, the most significant finding until this point is the fact that human rights and democracy were not prioritised by the EU. In the Marseille document's outline of fields of cooperation to be pursued there was emphasis on technical issues and matters such as implementation of the Code of Conduct on terrorism and ESDP dialogue. While there was mention of a commitment to human rights and exchange of experience on elections, this would take place "on a voluntary basis upon the request of any of the partners" (ibid., p 9). The EU thus took an extremely cautious stance, opting not to pressure MENA regimes on their record on human rights and democracy. In fact, taking a wider view, it is apparent that this dynamic could concurrently be found in the ENP. The European Parliament commented that "since the launching of the Barcelona Process no substantial progress has been made ... as regards adherence to, and respect for, some of the common values and principles highlighted in the 1995 Barcelona Declaration" (2009c, G; see also European Commission, 2009c). Tellingly, this did not seem to stand in the way of deepening cooperation on e.g. JHA issues. The example of Morocco illustrates this vividly:

*Although the reforms to advance democracy and human rights could be more ambitious, progress has nevertheless been made ... Nevertheless, persisting deficiencies in the functioning of the judiciary pose a risk to the reforms that have been launched. Obstacles to freedom of the press remain. (European Commission, 2009c, p. 6)*

However:

*The dialogue with the EU in certain sensitive sectors has further intensified, notably on the fight against organised crime and cooperation on border management issues. (ibid., p. 6)*

The situation in Tunisia reveals a similar dynamic. It was said that “challenges remain on the ground in the implementation of objectives agreed, notably on freedom of association and expression” (ibid., p. 6). Yet this did not halt JHA collaboration: “the dialogue that has been initiated in the frame of the subcommittee on Justice and Security should open the way for closer cooperation on the fight against terrorism and organised crime, on border management and on migration issues” (ibid., p. 6; see also Powel, 2009 for an analysis of EU-Tunisia relations). Thus, despite the barriers experienced in the field of human rights, cooperation in the sphere of JHA intensified. This suggests that the initial long-term, strategic vision of the EMP and also of the ENP was gradually downscaled towards areas where more immediate progress seemed feasible and where less resistance from the MENA regimes was expected. As we have said before, this represented a second best option vis-à-vis the Union’s earlier intention to address Europe and the MENA’s shared problems through comprehensive reform.

The UfM’s lack of a strong human rights component falls in sync with these dynamics and could thus be said to be representative for certain wider developments in Euro-Med relations. For the UfM, little evidence could be found to support the hypothesis that human rights and democracy were a significant variable. In this regard our hypothesis fails a hoop test for the hypothesised role of ideational drivers. As we will see below, further developments in the programme did little to rectify this situation, though we must note that this occurred in the context of a progressively worsening

regional political climate. This political climate could be said to have ‘muddied the waters’, making it more difficult to formulate far-reaching conclusions on the basis of the available evidence.

Notwithstanding the moderate development that had been made in Marseille in reconciling differences over the inclusion of the Arab League, Israeli-Arab (and by extension Euro-Mediterranean) relations were subsequently largely overshadowed by Israel’s three-week operation ‘Cast Lead’ in Gaza until 18 January 2009. More than 1400 Palestinians and 13 Israelis lost their lives in this operation (Amnesty International, 2009).<sup>149</sup> The Arab states responded by boycotting UfM meetings, which halted progress and put on hold further development of the Secretariat. Evidently this was a reminder of the difficulty of establishing multilateral cooperation in a region where outstanding security issues continued to dominate the agenda. Further spill-over was experienced when, after the Arab states had relinquished their initial boycott in June 2009, a new barrier was encountered when a planned summit in Istanbul had to be cancelled – this time following Egyptian objections to Israeli FM Lieberman’s bellicose rhetoric on bombing the Aswan Dam in response to potential Egyptian military redeployment in the Sinai (Haaretz, 2010a). In this manner events seemed to belie Alfred Tovias’ initially optimistic (at least from an Israeli or European point of view) projection that “there is ... no risk of the project being kidnapped by other countries and transformed into an arena that is politically hostile to Israel” (in Aliboni et. al., 2008, p.

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<sup>149</sup> According to the United Nations Fact Finding Mission’s report on the conflict (also known as the ‘Goldstone report’), more than 1,400 Palestinians lost their lives in a military operation that was “to a large degree aimed at destroying or incapacitating civilian property and the means of subsistence of the civilian population” (United Nations Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict, 2009, §1890). It described Cast Lead as “a deliberately disproportionate attack designed to punish, humiliate and terrorize a civilian population, radically diminish its local economic capacity both to work and to provide for itself, and to force upon it an ever increasing sense of dependency and vulnerability” (ibid., §1893).

27). In the German press there was a degree of *Schadenfreude* – in one discussion forum it was rhetorically asked: *Ist die Union ein tot geborenes Kind?* (The European, 2010).<sup>150</sup>

The Egyptian co-Presidency subsequently used its position to halt further UfM progress, and the European Union was relatively powerless to influence these developments. As Nassif Hitti, representative of the Arab League, commented: “If you cannot find the spirit of [the Madrid peace talks], there will be no Barcelona one, two, or three” (MEDEA, 2009). But in addition to the Arab-Israeli problems there were also continued tensions between some of the Arab states, such as Algeria and Morocco, who were divided over the Western Sahara issue. Therefore, though several sectoral ministerial meetings were held since 2008 (the first since the Gaza conflict was a meeting on sustainable development in Paris on June 25<sup>th</sup> 2009, boycotted however by Syria, Libya and Turkey [European Commission, 2009b]), it proved difficult to pick up ‘business as usual’, and criticism of the UfM was sometimes publicly expressed by key European actors. “I do not believe in the politics wonderfully described by Nicolas Sarkozy as a Union of today for tomorrow”, said EU ambassador to Morocco Eneko Landaburu, arguing that “divisions in the Arab world do not allow for a strong interregional policy” (La Vanguardia, 2010).

Accordingly, the locus of Euro-Med activity continued to be the Neighbourhood Policy. In the Commission’s planning for 2010 it was said that “special emphasis will be put on deepening bilateral relations” especially with Israel and Morocco, which is notable given their still questionable records on human rights (European Commission, 2009d). A similar gap between progress on political reform and collaboration with the

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<sup>150</sup> This translates as: ‘Is the Union a stillborn child?’ (author’s translation).

EU could be noted in the case of Egypt. In the ENP progress report on the country it was posited without further comment that:

*Discussions between the EU and Egypt on counter-terrorism took place in March 2009, concluding with a call for further cooperation of a concrete/operational nature. The UN Special Rapporteur on the protection of human rights while countering terrorism made his first ever visit to Egypt in April 2009, albeit under a limited mandate (only to discuss Egypt's draft anti-terror law). A request to make a follow-up visit to Egypt was not accepted.* (European Commission, 2009e, p. 7, emphasis added)<sup>151</sup>

What this (as well as other reviews of the ENP; see European Commission, 2010a; 2010e) clearly illustrates is how the dynamic observed in Chapter IV was continued. As is evident in the statements cited above, there was a degree of tension between JHA activities and the EU's prior goals with regards to human rights and democracy. This demonstrates how our ideational independent variable somewhat diminished in importance during the time period considered here.

When Spain took over the EU Presidency from Sweden in January 2010, its intention was to boost EU foreign policy and to take the lead in reviving the Union for the Mediterranean.<sup>152</sup> Plans were accordingly made for two summits to be held in

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<sup>151</sup> Notably ambiguous was also the following set of remarks: "The number of court actions against internet bloggers and activists increased in 2009, with several tried under emergency rather than civil law and sentenced to prison" (European Commission, 2009e, p. 5); viz.: "Egypt seeks EU and international backing for its initiative to combat the use of internet for terrorist purposes" (ibid. p. 7).

<sup>152</sup> As the Spanish Presidency's political programme stated: "The prosperity and stability of Europe and the neighbouring regions are intertwined. Spain will especially emphasise the defence of the unitary nature of the European neighbourhood policy and boost the balanced progress of its Mediterranean and

Barcelona: the 4th Euro-Mediterranean ministerial conference on water management, and the second major summit for the heads of state and government (planned for 7 June). Despite the gradual revival of the Union for the Mediterranean in 2009 – proving that it was “not dead”, in the words of German State Secretary for European Affairs Günter Gloser (MEDEA, 2009) – holding the planned meetings proved more difficult than expected. As for the water management meeting, albeit supposedly a technical field, it was ultimately announced in a press release that “discrepancies regarding the naming of the occupied Palestinian territories” had prevented the signing of an agreement: the Israelis refused to accept the term ‘occupied territories’ to describe the West Bank and Gaza and no compromise was reached (Union for the Mediterranean, 2010a). To make matters worse, the scheduled high-level summit was cancelled entirely. Ostensibly this was to prevent it from intervening with Israeli-Palestinian peace talks, but in the Spanish media it was suggested that a more important reason had been the tensions between Israel (and especially its FM Lieberman) and the Arab states (El Periódico Mediterraneo, 2010). This dynamic persisted and prevented two further meetings (7 June and 21 November), as Syria continued to refuse to meet with Lieberman, Turkey shunned Israel in light of its deadly commando raid on the Gaza-bound flotilla, and the Palestinian Authority objected to continued settlement construction in the West Bank (Haaretz, 2010a; 2010b). In response to these difficulties the biennial summits were postponed *sine die* – according to official Spanish sources this decision had been reached “in light of the evidence indicating that the currently stalled peace process in the Near East would make it impossible ... to enjoy satisfactory

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Eastern dimensions ... [A]ll the efforts to achieve a global solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict will continue to be actively pursued. The consolidation of the Euro-Mediterranean relation will be promoted by developing the large projects of the Union for the Mediterranean, as well as by implementing its institutional structures” (Spanish Presidency of the Council of the European Union, 2009, pp. 12-13).

participation” (La Moncloa, 2010). Capturing the point of view of many in the Arab world, one Egyptian commentator argued that:

*If you ask me, we're just fooling ourselves. We cannot, now or ever, be partners to an economic and political drive that promotes Israel's interests while the Palestinians are left behind. (Salama, 2010)*

To conclude this section; what does the evidence tell us about the ‘causal beliefs as roadmaps’ aspect of our hypothesis and the status of principled beliefs as a driver of EFP? As to the former, given that the causal beliefs that lay at the basis of the UfM were rather ambiguous – the programme was characterised more by the lack of a strategy than by an explicit set of ideas on causal relationships – the UfM is best understood in light of our findings in Chapter IV. As we proposed there, some of the EU’s policies suggested that there was a partial retreat from the pursuit of wide-ranging reform and economic integration vis-à-vis the MENA, with increased emphasis placed on short-term initiatives in e.g. the field of JHA. The UfM’s limited focus and functionalist structure serve as good examples of this approach, eschewing more distant strategic goals in favour of concrete gains. In this light it is possible to argue that the European Union gradually moved away from what had been a regional strategy towards a more ad-hoc approach for dealing with its southern neighbours. The causal beliefs underpinning this move were less clearly formulated than what had driven the EMP and ENP, which serves to underscore that a crisis of sorts existed in light of the lack of real achievements after almost 15 years of the Barcelona Process. Whilst the evidence does not conclusively falsify the idea that causal beliefs provide roadmaps, the absence of a clearly defined set of causal beliefs as well as the downscaling of ambitions suggest that

a qualitative shift had taken place with regards to the *type* of causal beliefs drawn upon by the EU. The clearest evidence that we have found exists in the form of beliefs on what does *not* work, but it has been harder to trace the formulation of an explicitly formulated set of alternative causal beliefs. In this regard the evidence mostly points towards the idea that region-wide intergovernmental collaboration would succour the EU's wider policies by increasing the MENA states' sense of co-ownership over Euro-Med relations. In comparison to earlier causal beliefs, this was a more ambiguous and less clearly formulated roadmap for action than e.g. the theory of economic modernisation that had animated the EMP and ENP.

With regards to our third test, which seeks to find out whether a causal relationship can be traced from behaviour through causal beliefs to independent variables, we have chosen to focus in this section on human rights/democracy given its potential significance on the intergovernmental political level. With regards to the UfM, however, it has not been possible to find evidence to suggest that principled beliefs played a necessary role in the formulation of the programme. As we have mentioned previously various explanations for the UfM can be envisioned, but principled beliefs do not feature prominently in any of them. Furthermore, if we imagine (counterfactually) that the EU did *not* have a principled belief in human rights and democracy, there is no reason why the UfM could not have looked very much the same as it did. After all, no substantive components of the programme were focused on the promotion of principled beliefs. Thus, the evidence does not allow us to posit with confidence that principled beliefs were a necessary driving variable for the Union for the Mediterranean.



**Table 18: The UfM's Intergovernmental Dimension and Principled Beliefs**

EU problem definition	No progress in regional sphere EMP, lack of co-ownership, wider lack of progress EMP/ENP
Policy Methods and Instruments	Involve MENA states through co-Presidency, high-level regional summits and conferences
Expected outcomes	Pertain mainly to agreements on specific issues, including anti-terror guidelines and water policy, ambiguous on wider strategic goals
Evidence in support of hypothesis	Straw in the wind evidence for causal beliefs as a roadmap for action, no evidence to support the necessary role of principled beliefs
Challenges	Tense political climate acts as spoiler, working with MENA governments complicates push to promote human rights/democracy
Actual outcomes	No tangible results achieved
Conclusion	Human rights and democracy not of proven significance

In a 2012 report, the Economic and Social Committee provided a good summary of the situation outlined in the above table: “The complete absence, with a few exceptions, of a democratic environment has obliged the EU to adapt its policies on pragmatic grounds and to accept as interlocutors figures that could by no means be described as democratic representatives of their peoples” (2012, §2.1.1). Clearly, this raises questions on what the further implications are for our theoretical approach, particularly in terms of the significance of ideational variables. These questions will be discussed in the final

section of this chapter as well as in Chapter VI. Before engaging in this discussion we turn to the UfM's projects and funding to investigate the role of material variables.

### **Projects and Funding**

The second key dimension of the UfM was its more 'practical' side, where common projects would be undertaken within the six areas that had been defined. Closely related to this aspect of the programme was the Secretariat that would be in charge of overseeing the execution of the projects, in turn linked to the issue of funding. Since the EU budget was decided for a set number of years, no significant allocations could be made to the UfM when it was initiated in 2008. Thus, whereas the projects were supposed to be the engine of the new framework there was a significant degree of insecurity over the extent to which this would be possible. In this section we trace developments in this field with a view to our second and third tests, focusing especially on the role of material variables.

To move things forward during the period of deadlock between 2008 and 2010, the Commission was able to provide or earmark funding for the priority projects of the UfM. This amount stood at just below €90m (with an added €50m EIB funding) (European Commission, 2009b). Projects were undertaken outside the UfM Secretariat framework (which had not been set up yet), and they consisted of *inter alia*: €22m for de-pollution of the Mediterranean Sea; €7.5m for maritime and land highways; €4.5m for maritime safety; and €1m for the Euro-Med University in Portoroz (Slovenia) (ibid.).<sup>153</sup> Though the Commission took the UfM's focus as a blueprint for enhanced

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<sup>153</sup> Furthermore, FEMIP monies (80% of the total) were directed towards UfM priority areas, including a sanitation scheme in Lebanon (€70m); the construction of a wind farm in Gabal El-Zeit in Egypt (€50m); widening the Rabat-Casablanca road in Morocco (€225m); and a venture capital fund for Palestinian private enterprises (€5m) (UfM Secretariat & EIB, 2010). 2010 also saw the creation of the Inframed

projects under the ENP, this did little to strengthen the UfM itself. And in private, European officials had argued from the start that it would be difficult to find sufficient funds: “now with the financial crisis it is more difficult if not impossible” (cited in Al-Ahram, 2008). Thus, the UfM’s principles provided a roadmap for EU action, but this was undertaken outside the UfM’s institutions, which had not yet been set up.

Progress was made with the adoption of the UfM Secretariat’s statutes on 3 March 2010 by Euro-Mediterranean senior officials (Union for the Mediterranean, 2010b). Commissioner for enlargement and the ENP Štefan Füle made the following comments to mark the occasion:

*The setting-up of the Secretariat represents both an opportunity and a hope for the whole region. It represents an opportunity and a hope for all Mediterranean partners that wish to work together in the promotion and realisation of common projects. It represents also an opportunity and a hope for Europe keen to see a vast economic area in the south of the Mediterranean, free from fragmentation, becoming a major trade and economic player in the region. (Füle, 2010, emphasis added)*

Two things stand out in this statement. First is the absence of any mention of human rights or democracy, which had been characteristic of official discourse on Euro-Med relations since the Barcelona Declaration. Second, though the Commission was primarily an external supporter rather than an integral party to the UfM (it had provided €3m and seconded one official to the Secretariat [ibid.]), the European interest in

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Infrastructure Fund by a grouping of investment banks, holding companies and financial institutions, with an initial budget of €385m (Caisse des Dépôts et. al., 2010).

economic expansion and becoming ‘a major player’ was explicitly connected to the Secretariat’s operations. The impression is thus given that, at least from the Commission’s standpoint, the Secretariat was to complement the Union’s interest in economic expansion towards the south. Evidently, this provides support for our hypothesis’ emphasis on the importance of economic interests in driving EFP.

After the adoption of its statutes there was also the inauguration of the Secretariat’s first Secretary General: former Jordanian ambassador to the EU Ahmad Masa’deh.<sup>154</sup> This was an important step, given that, as stated in the UfM’s founding Declaration, the initiative’s added value would reside in “its capacity to attract more financial resources for regional projects” (Union for the Mediterranean, 2008a, §31). The ‘real meat’ of the UfM – and perhaps the most important criterion for reviewing its performance – thus lay with the projects that would be undertaken and the extra injection of funds that was to accompany it. A properly functioning Secretariat was imperative for fulfilling this goal – Masa’deh described its mission as being a “driver of Mediterranean unity” (Al-Ahram, 2010).

In this light the role of the Secretariat was to serve as a liaison for the co-Presidencies and other decision making bodies as well as to draw up proposals for joint initiatives, which would then be approved by the political bodies (senior officials). After approval of a project it would furthermore be the Secretariat’s job to promote it and to serve as a focal point for funding (Union for the Mediterranean, 2010b). In other words,

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<sup>154</sup> Though originally only one Deputy Secretary General was envisioned, no less than six were appointed after a difficult process of diplomatic bargaining (Johansson-Nogués, 2011, pp. 28-29). Their responsibilities were divided as follows: 1) Italy – project funding, co-ordination and SMEs; 2) Turkey – transport; 3) Greece – energy; 4) Palestinian Authority – environment and water; 5) Israel – higher education and research 6) Malta – social and civil affairs (Union for the Mediterranean, 2010b, XII). This complex structure can be seen as posing a bureaucratic hurdle of sorts, much in contradiction to the idea that the Secretariat “will have a lean structure” (Union for the Mediterranean, 2010b., III.1).

within the UfM the Secretariat was to play a role similar to the European Commission's role in the EMP, acting as the practical coordinator of the directions and initiatives mandated by the senior officials and the ministerial meetings, though drawing primarily on external financial sources. Further contrary to the European Commission's strategy of relatively clear financial planning, the earlier ambiguities regarding the UfM's budget were not entirely resolved in the Secretariat's statute. The document envisioned a combination of voluntary contributions from participating states and EU funding through the ENPI, stating that "any funding by the European Union will come from existing resources" (ibid., §VIII.1).

The full extent of the problem came to the fore when, one year after he had taken office, Secretary General Masa'deh stepped down from his position. The main reason he gave to motivate his decision was a lack of commitment and funding, primarily from northern EU member states (CNA, 2011; ABC, 2011). The available budget for 2011 was reduced by 60% to €6.2m (viz. an estimated requirement of €16m) and many of the participating states did not send their national experts as required, leaving many of the Secretariat's desks empty (Ayadi & Gadi, 2011, p. 18; Schumacher, 2011; CNA, 2010). One source suggested that the UfM 'dream' had turned into a 'nightmare' (Deutschlandradio, 2011). What is clearly illustrated by these dynamics is that the member states were unwilling to sacrifice resources in light of the uncertain benefits of the UfM, preferring instead the existing channels and financial commitments of the ENP. Despite the earlier language of extending the EU's economic reach, there did not seem to be much conviction amongst the member states that the UfM was a useful vehicle to realise this goal. This was described by high-level officials involved with the process as one the greatest challenges in getting the UfM up to speed (Interviews with EEAS Officials, 3 & 16 June 2014, telephone).

As a result of the difficult situation there was much delay in starting up the first projects. Given that these projects were meant to form the backbone of the UfM, it is possible to say that rather than adding value up until now the initiative had problematised more than it had resolved. Mr. Masa'deh's successor was the Moroccan diplomat Youssef Amrani – referred to as 'the face of gridlock' in one publication (Zenith, 2011) – and in 2011 the first projects were finally 'labelled' (as it is called in UfM parlance, referring to the fact that projects are neither funded nor executed by the UfM infrastructure itself, but mostly endorsed to rally funding). The first of these projects was focused on a 100 million cubic meters desalination facility and distribution system in the Gaza Strip, referred to as "the largest single facility to be built in Gaza" (UfM Secretariat, 2012, p. 1). Due to funding problems, however, the project seems to have been gradually abandoned (inquiries with the UfM Secretariat in May 2014 revealed that funding is still being sought). In parallel, in 2013 it was announced that a desalination initiative for Gaza will be implemented by UNICEF with a €10 million EU grant (UNICEF, 2013). What is remarkable is that the total cost was initially estimated by the UfM Secretariat at \$230 million, excluding related costs such as power supply (UfM Secretariat, 2012, p. 3). When asked, UNICEF explained that in contrast to the UfM initiative the desalination facility to be constructed would serve only a small portion of Gaza, though it is not clear to what extent this accounts for the significant difference between \$230 million and €10 million (UNICEF refused to provide a budget for the plan in email correspondence with author, May 2014). What is unambiguously clear, though, is that the ambitious original plan has not been realised as a result of severe financial aporiae and remains in a state of limbo.

Other projects that have been labelled include entrepreneurship days for female students in Jordan, Morocco, Palestine and Spain; a series of Master's and PhD study

programmes; the creation of a network of Euro-Mediterranean logistics platforms; and the construction of a Euro-Med university in Fez (Morocco). At the time of writing, the most recent projects include business skills trainings; depollution of the Lake of Bizerte in Tunisia; women empowerment; and educational activities related to food security.<sup>155</sup> Given the relative novelty of the projects (most have not been started yet) it is too early to provide an evaluation of their operation and/or effectiveness. Yet reviewing the scope and focus of the selected projects, it is clear that they are all relatively low level. Moreover, they are much less explicitly integrated with a wider strategy than comparable activities in the EMP/ENP had been, appearing instead as relatively ad-hoc. The UfM, in other words, has extremely little concrete achievement to boast of.

Where does this leave us in terms of the validity and explanatory value of our hypothesis? As to our second test, which assesses the role of causal beliefs as a roadmap for EU foreign policy, despite the relatively narrow evidential basis (due to the UfM's short period of operation) our analysis points towards a technical implementation in line with the functionalist causal beliefs espoused earlier. Yet given the many complications that were experienced, it is difficult to provide a full analysis of the dynamics in question. In this regard it can be reiterated that the UfM symbolises the wider crisis that existed in Euro-Med relations, representing the gradual departure from the wide-ranging strategic causal beliefs adopted in earlier EU policies towards the south. Principal efforts continued to be undertaken within the EMP/ENP framework, but here too it was clear that the causal beliefs that had been formulated in the 1990s were to some extent being questioned. Thus, Euro-Mediterranean relations lacked much of the sense of purpose that we have seen earlier; the UfM is a useful if somewhat extreme representative of this state of affairs.

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<sup>155</sup> See [<http://www.ufmsecretariat.org/en/projects>], accessed 14 May 2014.

**Table 19: Economic Interests and the UfM**

EU problem definition	Issues across six functional fields, greater collaboration needed for addressing common challenges
Policy Methods and Instruments	Secretariat leverages funding for common projects
Expected outcomes	Diverse; achievements in six functional areas but little wider strategic purview
Evidence in support of hypothesis	Common projects linked to EU economic interests
Challenges	Lack of funding, disinterest from participants
Actual outcomes	Small number of projects labelled, but overall no tangible results achieved
Conclusion	Some indication of pursuit of economic interests, but progress is too limited

In the table above we can see that, as far as the role of economic gains is concerned, there is some evidence to indicate that the UfM's projects were viewed as complementary to wider efforts at expanding the EU's economic purview. However, the strength of this evidence is ameliorated by the scarcity of projects, the lack of funding and the limited breadth of the projects, which evinces a lack of interest from the EU's member states. Simply put, the UfM has not been a significant policy arena for the pursuit of economic goals in the MENA. It has operated mostly on an ad-hoc basis without a clear underlying strategy, other than a generally defined functionalist perspective. Altogether it has been unclear what the envisioned end-results have been.



In this context it has proven difficult to find strong evidence in support of our hypothesis.

## ***Conclusion***

We have traced the development of the Union for the Mediterranean through its two stages to determine what causal beliefs lay at the basis of the initiative. Whilst the initial stage (in which the plan was proffered within the French domestic arena) contained too great a degree of ambiguity to be able to determine with clarity what the relevant causal beliefs were, the linking of the UfM to the EMP's shortcomings by the European Commission evinced an improved understanding of what the purpose of the UfM was meant to be: to address gaps and problems in the EMP and thereby to increase the visibility of the Barcelona Process. The UfM's most striking characteristic in this regard has been its eschewal of a 'grand' vision – i.e. an integrated set of causal beliefs, such as the modernisation theory of economic development. Instead, the focus has been on incremental, short-term and ad-hoc issues in an explicit downscaling of ambitions. Whereas the EMP and the ENP had had a relatively clear roadmap for action based on an explicitly defined set of goals and related policy measures, the UfM was both more ambiguous and more pragmatic. Whilst this can be partially explained with reference to the fact that it was always meant to be merely supplementary to existing framework and did not come forward in the context of a significant critical juncture, we have argued that the UfM can also be considered as symbolic for the wider crisis in Europe's Mediterranean policy. Simply put, after about 15 years of intensive Euro-Med relations there were very few concrete achievements to speak of, which eroded faith in the causal beliefs that had been constitutive of the status quo. Particularly in the JHA dimension of the ENP this has been observable, and the UfM's unambitious framing can be considered as consistent with this trend. In this light the European Parliament was

justified in its complaint about “the absence of a clear definition of the EU’s Mediterranean policy ... despite the creation of the UfM” (2010c, §2). In our interviews it was often said that after the Arab Spring it was realised that a clearer vision with a more integrated set of tools was needed, which could perhaps be seen as an indirect admission of some of the problems observed (Interviews with EEAS Officials, 2 & 16 June 2014, telephone). Interestingly enough, this provides some contrast with Tony Blair’s characteristically unremorseful statement that “the West should [not] be the slightest bit embarrassed about the fact that it’s been working with Mubarak over the peace process but at the same time it’s been urging change in Egypt” (The Guardian, 2011). Further discussion of these issues will follow in Chapter VI.

This leads to our second and third tests, which seek to assess the role of causal beliefs and material/ideational variables as drivers of the EU’s policies. Given the programme’s scaled-down nature and the many remaining ambiguities, it is more difficult to find strong support for our second test. Whilst the evidence does not falsify the notion that causal beliefs provide a roadmap of sorts, beyond the functionalist approach there is less evidence of exactly what the EU expected to get out of the UfM, with a strong sense primarily given of what would *not* work. The UfM thus appears as a second best option in light of wider failures, and in this regard it was symbolic for the progressive questioning of the European Union’s earlier ideas regarding the best way to address problems related to or shared with the MENA states. What had been tried in the past had simply not worked, but the reformative, integrative vision of before was not replaced with an equivalent set of strategic causal beliefs on how to move forward. The result was an ‘unstrategic’, ambiguous policy, complicated all the more by the difficult regional situation. The outcomes of our second test are therefore somewhat inconclusive, pointing primarily to the notion that the EU appeared at a loss as to how it

could best interact with the MENA. Important to note here is that due to the more limited timeframe considered in this chapter it is more difficult to assess the overall significance of this period. There were some very tense circumstances which made things difficult for the EU, so whether EU policy will recover in the long run remains to be seen. In the light of especially Chapter IV, however, the UfM appears as the culmination of an initially hopeful but progressively challenging trajectory.

For our third test we have attempted to find evidence that would either support or challenge our hypothesis that principled beliefs and economic interests are necessary variables for explaining EU policies. Unfortunately, the Union for the Mediterranean provides little evidence on both counts. As far as human rights and democracy are concerned, the UfM simply did not address the topic at all. This could be considered as failing a hoop test, given that even rhetorical emphasis was largely absent in the evidence considered. Generally speaking, failing a hoop test falsifies a hypothesis, but given the amount of supporting data found in the other two empirical chapters, the more limited timeframe considered, and the supplemental nature of the UfM we consider this finding to be a strong challenge rather than a decisive blow. However, the challenge is underlined by the concurrence of the UfM's dynamics with wider developments in the EU's policies, as argued throughout the current and foregoing chapters. We will return to this point in Chapter VI.

Challenges of a similar nature were encountered in the field of economic interests. Even though the hoop test that we conducted was not failed given the possibility to envision a degree of consistency between the UfM and the EU's material interests, it could not be said that the data provides a strong basis to support our conceptualisation of EFP. Simply put: the hypothesis tested in this thesis does not appear as a good fit with the dynamics observed in the Union for the Mediterranean

framework. In part this may be due to the fact that the regional political situation had made it extremely difficult for the EU to pursue any kind of objectives, but even outside this fact it is apparent that explanations for the UfM must be sought primarily beyond principled beliefs and shared economic interests. In this regard, on the basis of our theoretical model the UfM can be viewed chiefly as a testament to the intra-European division and strategic confusion that gradually took hold of Euro-Med relations as the results of more than a decade of the Barcelona Process bore little fruit. Given this state of affairs, it is clear that in this instance our fourth test/question must be answered in the negative. Once again, given the limited size of the UfM and its lack of prioritisation and results we must be cautious in attaching far-reaching significance to these findings. That said, they are symbolic for what we have regarded as a wider crisis in EU policy, in which earlier causal beliefs were increasingly questioned and strategic goals (both normative and material) seemed more difficult to attain.

Looking at the relevant literature, it is remarkable that in comparison to other EU initiatives less effort at wider theorisation of the UfM has been undertaken. The most substantial contributions have come from authors who had earlier challenged Europe's normativity and/or who had adopted a relatively nuanced perspective vis-à-vis the split between realist and constructivist approaches. Federica Bicchì, for example, wrote that "the political project of 'constructing a Mediterranean region' based on democracy and human rights has been largely abandoned amid a progressive fragmentation of efforts" (2011, p. 14), while Patrick Holden has referred to the UfM as "a kind of smorgasbord of policies and institutions" (2011, p. 167). Perhaps the strongest criticism of the UfM and the tendencies in EFP which it seemed to embody was expressed by Kristina Kausch and Richard Youngs (2009). For them the Union for the Mediterranean was "not a new lease of life but another nail in the coffin of the

vision that infused the inception of the EMP in 1995” (p. 963). They further argued that the UfM “clearly dilutes the political character and thrust of the EMP vision” (p. 963) and “is curiously divorced from the world around it” (p. 964). Or as Rosemary Hollis argues: “The UfM largely dispenses with the normative agenda that characterized EU aspirations for the EMP in its early years” (2011, p. 102).

In this vein it is clear that our analysis is consistent with the main tenor of academic studies on the UfM, where it is largely argued that the programme has made a negative contribution to the EU’s Mediterranean policy (and especially the ideational aspects of it). Similar criticisms have been expressed in the popular media. In an opinion piece by Al Jazeera’s chief political analyst, the initiative was described as ‘a victory for realism’: “Unlike its predecessors, the Union for the Mediterranean promised much and asked little of its partners. There are no preconditions to join and certainly no demands to improve human rights or establish democratic systems of governance” (Bishara, 2008). Elsewhere Mr. Bishara argued that in the UfM “geopolitics overrode human rights, and economics trumped democracy as Western powers closely embraced Israel and the Arab dictatorships” (2012). In reply to this analysis we must add that neither geopolitics nor economics really triumphed in the UfM, given that the benefits of the framework for either of these were ambiguous as well.

In sum, most of the academic and popular commentary has been roundly negative. Official comments from EU actors have, in fact, echoed some of the criticisms. As Štefan Füle admitted as early as April 2011: “the Union for the Mediterranean has the potential to make a real difference – but frankly it has not yet done so and must be revitalised” (Füle, 2011). The ESC was remarkably honest: “The Union for the Mediterranean ... has so far failed to deliver the expected results. Its role and objectives therefore need to be radically redefined” (Economic and Social

Committee, 2012, §5.3). Our analysis does not deviate from this trend, but even though our independent variables have not satisfactorily explained the UfM we have been able to offer some added value with our approach by framing the new programme in terms of the erosion of faith in earlier causal beliefs. In this sense the focus on causal beliefs and their connection to policy drivers has proven fruitful, as it has allowed us to understand how important an integrative set of causal beliefs has been for tying together the various variables that have played a role in the formulation and implementation of EU foreign policy. If this set of beliefs is absent or is belied by real-world events, as happened in the case of Euro-Mediterranean relations, foreign policy can either follow the existing path in a foolhardy manner, develop a new set of causal beliefs to integrate various interests, or focus on functional or ad-hoc issues in a situation of strategic confusion. The latter scenario seems to best describe what happened with the Union for the Mediterranean.

## - VI -

# Conclusions

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This thesis has engaged with an important analytical and empirical conundrum regarding the European Union's foreign policy. Our approach was inspired by a critical reading of the academic literature on the topic, which has been viewed in terms of a binary between analyses that stress either ideational or material factors. Whilst we recognise the existence of various more balanced perspectives, in general it appears to be the case that (despite a widespread acknowledgement of ideational-material interaction in real-world politics) there have been relatively few theoretically-minded efforts to delineate more specifically how intermingling takes place. In this light it has been our aim to advance IR theory and the debate on EFP by testing the hypothesis that ideas and material self-interests jointly drive the European Union's foreign policy, building upon the perspective advanced by Goldstein and Keohane (1993) as well as several influential perspectives on EFP. The case study that was chosen for this effort is EU policy towards the Middle East and North Africa, specifically the EMP, ENP and UfM. The contribution of this thesis thus resides in its assessment of an ambitious hypothesis through comprehensive empirical research with a unique set of primary and secondary data.

This chapter provides a discussion of our findings as well as their wider theoretical and practical implications. We begin with an overview of our approach and the main findings of our investigation. In this section we provide an answer to our research question as we dwell upon the validity of the hypothesis formulated in Chapter II. In view of the cumulative evidence gathered we focus especially on our fourth

question/test: do principled beliefs and economic interests provide sufficient explanation for the EU's Mediterranean policies? As we will see, insufficient evidence was found to support this claim fully, but we do point to several other conclusions that can be drawn with more confidence, enabling us to formulate our final answer to the research question.

The second part of this chapter engages with the wider implications of our study. As we situate our findings within the existing academic literature, it is stressed that our integrative perspective has a number of advantages, offering explanatory breadth with sensitivity to context and change. Attention is subsequently paid to the implications of our findings for both theory and practice. As to the former, we discuss a number of key points drawn from our study that could help advance the state of theorising on material-ideational interaction. Finally, we highlight some of the EU's recent efforts and discuss them in light of earlier policies as analysed throughout this thesis.

## ***Overview of Approach and Findings***

### **Research Strategy**

We began this research project by drawing attention to the split between ideational and material approaches to IR, primarily marked by the debate between realism and liberalism/constructivism. Despite the presence of a wide multiplicity of perspectives, in resonance with a number of influential authors we have noted that divergence has been perceptible in studies on the European Union's foreign policy engagements (see e.g. Cavatorta & Pace, 2010; Costalli, 2009; Youngs, 2004) – particularly with respect to Euro-Mediterranean relations (Bechev & Nicolaïdis, 2010; Attinà, 2003). Positioning ourselves explicitly in the middle ground, it has been our aim to explore the strengths



and weaknesses of an integrative approach that utilises key assumptions of both perspectives. To this purpose the following research question was posed:

*What drives the EU's policies towards the MENA; European ideas, the EU's material interests, or some combination of both?*

A strategy of hypothesis-testing was chosen to verify the benefits of a comprehensive approach. Two particular theoretical perspectives have served as the building blocks for our hypothesis, pertaining to ideational and material variables respectively. With respect to the ideational dimension, we have seen that concepts such as ideas, culture, identity and norms have been at the forefront of efforts to describe the EU's distinguishing features in IR, leading to an emphasis on what makes it unique within the international domain. This approach is well-represented by the 'normative power' thesis (Manners, 2002). It argues that the Union's actions are 'different' because of what it is; i.e. a supranational organisation founded on the principles of peace, multilateral cooperation and liberal values. Supporters of the normative view hold that the purpose of common foreign policy is to transmit this set of values to external actors and thus to 'normalise' international relations by regulating the modalities of appropriate behaviour. In this manner the normative approach suggests close linkage between identity, interests and actions. This view finds its theoretical justification in a constructivist conceptualisation of IR, which is primarily interested in how collective cognitions and processes of socialisation impact upon actors' interests and their self-understandings. What constructivists argue is that ideas matter, and this argument has found fertile ground in studies that have tried to come to grips with the European Union's contribution to global affairs. However, NPE scholars have sometimes been somewhat reluctant to

empirically verify their hypotheses, and this is one of the areas where we aim to make a contribution to the existing literature. What is more, they have been open to the charge of being too idealistic or naïve about EFP; we will return to this point below.

What we took from the ideational approach is a focus on what has been referred to as Europe's principled beliefs, expressed especially in terms of support for democracy and human rights. Given that these values are often highlighted in constructivist/normativist research on the EU, make up a key element of the normative approach, and touch upon issues of great relevance for the MENA, they constitute an excellent variable to be included in our research.

On the material side, represented by the realist paradigm of IR, typically there is emphasis on issues such as relative power, domination and international competition. Whilst many post-Cold War realists have attempted to escape the overly sterile approach of neorealism, the 'brute materialism' of human nature, anarchy and material capabilities has remained at the heart of the theory's explanatory framework. One example is neoclassical realism, which fuses structural analysis with investigation into the ideas of key decision makers, as it posits that the inputs from the international system are 'filtered' through interpretations (Rose, 1998). While this is seen as a welcome step from this thesis' perspective, the neorealist-inspired focus on structural forces lends itself less favourably to an in-depth analysis of specific policies. For this reason we have discussed the broader category of classical realism, which can be synthesised with a constructivist approach (Barkin, 2003), but gives rise to a very different view on the EU than what is argued by the normative school: Europe is not expected to be able to fundamentally transcend the pitfalls of international relations.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> To cite one author who made the opposite argument, i.e. that Europe *could* transcend the traditional risks of IR: "In the long run, the EU can contribute to the transformation of the international system, by

As Raymond Aron wrote: “The federation of Western Europe will contribute to peace or to international tension, but in any case, it will not modify the international order” (1981, p. 755). In this vein it is expected by realists that the risks of anarchy, conflict and competition will be shifted towards the borders of the European zone of peace and prosperity and placed at the feet of a new ‘them’ (Costalli, 2009).

On the basis of these assumptions realists have stressed that the EU’s chief purpose is to advance the economic interests of its members (Hyde-Price, 2008; Zimmermann, 2007). Similar to our engagement with principled beliefs, this assertion was reconceptualised as a necessary but not sufficient way to account for EFP (drawing on the terminology found in Mahoney, 2012; van Evera, 1997). Thus, utilising the perspective outlined by Goldstein and Keohane (1993), which has as its key distinguishing feature an emphasis on the coexistence of material and ideational drivers, we have hypothesised that principled beliefs and economic interests are each necessary but not sufficient to account for EU policies towards the MENA. We also hypothesised that when fused these two dimensions might provide an explanation that captures the core dynamics of EFP towards the MENA to a sufficient extent.

In order to explain EU policy it has been necessary to identify a causal mechanism, for, as Mahoney writes, “to explain a phenomenon is to identify the causal mechanisms that permit and/or generate the phenomenon” (2012, p. 586). As a causal mechanism to connect our independent variables to the dependent variable (EU policy), we have followed Goldstein and Keohane in focusing on causal beliefs, defined as consensus amongst elites regarding cause-effect relationships relevant to foreign policy. Such beliefs are theorised as providing a roadmap for action, given that they provide the

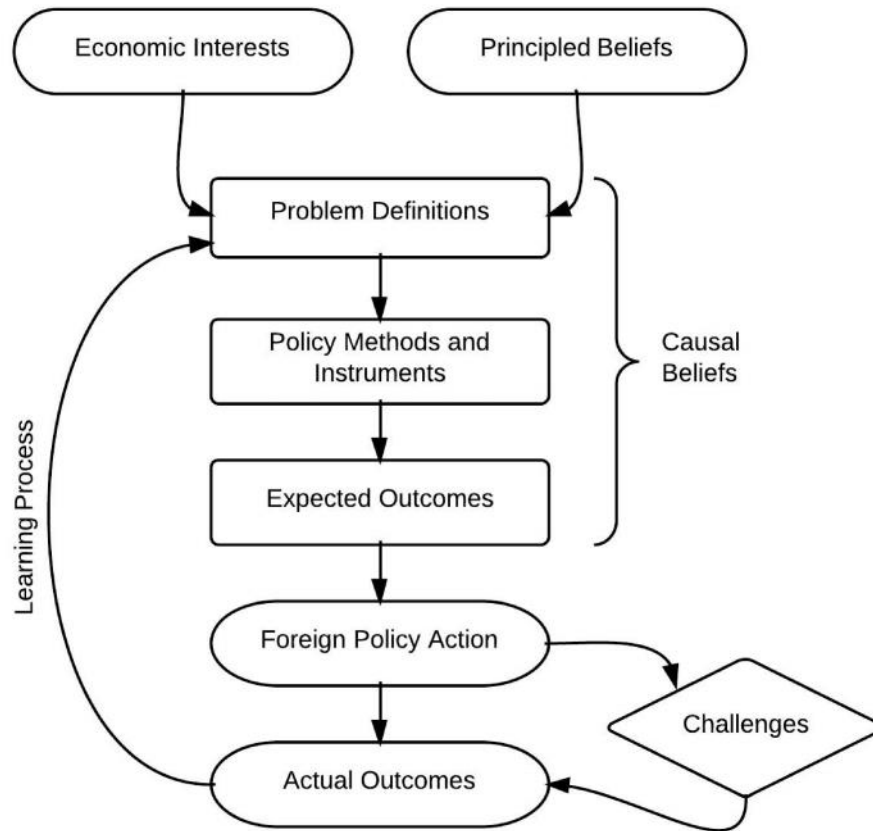
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reinforcing elements of international society such as international law and inter-state cooperation, and minimizing those of power politics” (Smith, 2003, pp. 107-108).

‘theory’ used by policy makers to diagnose problems and to predict the results of their actions. Policy change could accordingly be explained in terms of changes to the independent variables (less likely due to their typically lasting nature), as a result of altered causal beliefs on the basis of experience (defined as a learning process), and/or as being enabled by significant contextual shifts defined as critical junctures. At heart, therefore, our approach places a rationalist logic within a world that is socially constructed, highlighting the continued search for improved policies within a generally restrictive but sometimes permissive political environment. Such an outlook has been outlined by various authors as a viable approach to fusing realist and constructivist ideas (Youngs, 2004; Adler, 2002; Katzenstein et. al., 1998).

Altogether this has generated the following model to underpin our hypothesis and its operationalisation:

**Table 20: Extended Hypothetical Model for Drivers of EFP (revisited)**



Given the above model, the hypothesis that was formulated in reply to our research question is: *the EU's belief in democracy and human rights and its interest in economic gains operate jointly through causal beliefs, thus driving the EU's policies towards the MENA*. A process-tracing methodology was chosen in light of its suitability for hypothesis-testing and its ability to deal with complex causal relationships, utilising a wide range of textual sources as our core dataset with in-depth interviews with key officials and other relevant individuals added for the purpose of triangulating findings. Furthermore, in reflection of our ambition to take heed of the types of tests and evidential support available (hoop, smoking gun or straw in the wind), four tests – formulated as questions – were drawn up to assess the various components of our

hypothesis (drawing especially on the methodological steps outlined in Mahoney, 2012). The four questions were:

1. What were the EU's causal beliefs?
2. What were the EU's policies towards the Mediterranean; did causal beliefs provide a roadmap for action?
3. Were economic gains and principled beliefs necessary variables for the EU's roadmap/actions?
4. Do economic gains and principled beliefs jointly provide sufficient explanation for the EU's policies?

For each of the three sub-case studies chosen – the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership; the European Neighbourhood Policy; and the Union for the Mediterranean – we have endeavoured to answer these questions. Yet the fourth question has until now been emphasised to a lesser extent given its need for an especially broad evidential basis. Below we will therefore discuss our key findings in terms of how they support or challenge our hypothesis with the purpose of undertaking our final test, thereby providing an answer to our overarching research question.

## **Findings**

With respect to the EU's causal beliefs and their status as a roadmap for policy (questions one and two), we have been able to find strong evidence in support of our hypothesis. The best example is perhaps that of the Euro-Med Partnership in its earliest forms. Here, particularly within the Barcelona Declaration and the Euro-Med Association Agreements, a comprehensive and clearly defined set of causal beliefs was in evidence. The key hallmarks of the EU's approach were to rely on structural

adjustment, FDI and the private sector in order to generate a more prosperous and therefore more stable Mediterranean regional environment. In this regard the EU conformed to the reigning orthodoxy of the 1990s, as Western governments largely organised their policies around the market-oriented Washington Consensus in collaboration with the IMF and the World Bank. The EU's approach to the Mediterranean was accordingly chiefly focused on helping MENA partners to progress in their IMF-promoted structural reform programmes, as it was expected that this type of 'modernisation' would engender a range of benefits for both north and south. We have considered the more cynical interpretation that a form of exploitation (by stripping protective barriers to domestic markets) had always been the goal, as critics of neoliberal economics are wont to assert, but it has proved difficult to support this claim given the recognised interdependence between MENA stability and various European interests. The suggestion of economic exploitation was widely rejected by EU officials interviewed (Interviews with EEAS Officials, 2, 6 & 16 June 2014, telephone), even in the case of individuals who openly expressed other criticisms of the EU (Interview with EEAS Official, 3 June 2014, telephone). For these reasons we deem it most likely that it was actually believed that structural reform would provide the best avenue towards regional progress (also given that similar reforms were undertaken inside the EU itself), though (as discussed below) we must add that this was by no means a purely altruistic stance. In fact, what is especially characteristic about the EU's causal beliefs was that they reflected a conviction in the possibility of a win-win scenario in which both sides to the EMP would benefit.

We have observed a high degree of consistency between the identified causal beliefs and subsequent actions in the EMP (we have been extremely cautious not to reverse this order in order to retain our ability to falsify our hypothesis). On this basis

we have argued that our hypothesis passes the first and second tests. Yet this does not mean that causal beliefs have been fixed, as in fact there have been various important (though partial) shifts over time. Crucially, change was observed in the European Neighbourhood Policy. Though this programme retained most of the core principles of the EMP, there is evidence to suggest that the challenges experienced in the Barcelona Process gave rise to a modified set of causal beliefs to serve as the roadmap for EU policy. Simply put, reality did not match earlier expectations, and as both the IMF and the World Bank relaxed some of the more stringent principles of structural adjustment, reflecting a changing *Zeitgeist*, the EU took a slightly more hands-on approach with an extended set of benefits to be enjoyed by the MENA partners. Most importantly, though it was already clear that the 2010 deadline for the Euro-Mediterranean FTZ would likely be missed, the southern partners were offered a so-called stake in the common market, signalling the EU's desire for far-going economic integration and qualitatively 'different' relations with neighbouring states. The political dimension was strengthened as well, with increased attention for the democratic deficit that continued to characterise political realities across the Maghreb and Mashriq. The causal belief underpinning these shifts was that political and economic reform towards what could be described as a more market-based and more democratic model of governance would benefit stability and prosperity in the south as well as European trade and investment interests. In addition, it was believed that more European assistance and guidance were required than what had been provided previously. As we have seen, these shifts were driven by the lessons learned through both the EMP as well as the EU's enlargement process, and they were iterated at the juncture created by enlargement and the Iraq war. In this manner we have identified a complex set of dynamics, consistent with our model, to



explain shifts in the EU's policies. This has provided support for the hypothesised role of causal beliefs as roadmaps.

At this point we must admit that the story was somewhat complicated by developments observed within the ENP and particularly the UfM. In the increased emphasis on JHA that was gradually placed within the Neighbourhood Policy, the European Union appeared to go somewhat 'off script' as regards its reformative stance vis-à-vis the Mediterranean. Further dilution was observed in the UfM, where the core principles of especially the EMP seemed to have been abandoned altogether – one official we interviewed even called the UfM a 'sideshow' due to its perceived distance from the chief objectives of Euro-Med cooperation (Interview with EEAS Official, 3 June 2014, telephone). Whilst the overall weight of the evidence appears to be in support of our hypothesis, in our view these developments do signal that the earlier causal beliefs suffered a degree of erosion, as they were replaced with a more short-term or even ad-hoc approach towards the MENA. Perhaps this is not surprising if we consider that real-world events have largely belied the expectations inherent in EU policy, as political oppression, authoritarianism, poverty and instability remained prevalent across the MENA in spite of significant economic reforms. The explosions of the 'Arab Spring' testify to this conclusion, and it is interesting to note that our analysis points towards a degree of what might be called strategic confusion within the EU some time before these events took place. Of course it is always easier to make sense of political events retrospectively, but what is clear is that the failure of extant approaches was a known fact, exemplified by the UfM's lack of a well-defined strategic component. In this light interviewees were keen to stress that the Arab Spring held some valuable lessons in light of which EU policy has now been improved (Interviews with EEAS Officials, 2 & 16 June 2014, telephone; also discussed below).

In sum, our hypothesis has passed the first and second tests, but the evidence is stronger for the earlier stages of Euro-Med relations than for more recent initiatives. This has had important ‘knock on’ effects for the outcomes of our third test. Within the EMP, EU economic interests were clearly represented in the emphasis that was placed on foreign investment. After all, structural adjustment in the MENA would offer EU-based investors the opportunity to explore new markets and thereby to increase European wealth, as argued by realist observers of the EU. We have been able to pinpoint several explicit admissions of how expansive economic interests played a key role in the problem definitions inherent to the EU’s causal beliefs in both the EMP and ENP, showing how the independent variable of economic interests was causally linked to EU policy through the mechanism of causal beliefs as roadmaps. Crucial examples include the Euro-Mediterranean free trade zone as well as the wider push towards market integration in the ENP, the costs of which were very heavy for the MENA partners whilst significant benefits were expected for EU businesses.

Thus, we can conclude with a high degree of certainty that economic interests are a necessary variable to account for the EU’s actions towards its southern neighbours. The most significant challenge to our hypothesis that we encountered pertained to divisions within the EU, characterised as tensions between absolute and relative gains. Examples include the struggle over the idea of an investment bank for the MENA and the difficulties experienced in liberalisation of agricultural goods and services. In view of these issues we have argued that far-going analyses of the EU as an imperial or hegemonic actor (see Sepos, 2013) struggle to recognise its limitations as an actor (further discussed below). Sensitivity to the scope and nature of the EU’s economic interests thus remains important, despite the steps taken towards an increasingly extensive common foreign policy, which serves as an important reminder for theorists

regarding the difficulty of making generalisations about foreign policy interests. This is reflected in the table below:

**Table 21: EU Economic Interests and Euro-Med Institutional Frameworks**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Key EU Interests</b>	<b>Policy Methods</b>	<b>Challenges &amp; Impact</b>
<1995	Bilateral trade benefits	Preferential trade agreements	No substantial common policy → situation deemed unsatisfactory by both sides
1995-2003 (EMP)	Expansion of EU market, primary focus on European investment in MENA	FTZ; deregulation of barriers to trade and investment in MENA through Association Agreements	Insufficient economic support for MENA partners; no member state support for EU market liberalisation or investment bank → investment remained suppressed and Euro-Med trade did not significantly increase
2003-2008 (ENP)	Qualitatively 'different' relationship with neighbourhood; far-going market integration	FTZ; use of instruments related to accession process	Internal divisions in EU weaken bargaining position → moderate impacts: progress for some partners in limited spheres
2008> (UfM)	As above, but with added focus on pragmatic collaboration	Common projects across key thematic areas	Lack of substantive interest from member states → too early for full evaluation, but results unsatisfactory until now

An important element of our hypothesis was that material interests are necessary *but not sufficient* to explain EU policy. This was corroborated by the evidence considered, as a wide range of actions do not appear to pertain in a direct manner to a European interest in market expansion. This is especially true for activities within the purview of the

EMP's first basket, where support was given for initiatives related to the promotion of human rights and democracy across the MENA. This has allowed us to find support for the hypothesised role of principled beliefs, particularly within the EU's various relevant programmes on political reform and its strong (rhetorical) commitments in this sphere. Put differently; within the problem definitions present in the identified causal beliefs (and the EU's accordant actions), democracy and human rights have played a distinct role. While realists might dismiss such dynamics as mere posturing, we have found it difficult to account for EU behaviour entirely in terms of self-interest. The most plausible explanation, in our view, is that principled beliefs have been a key (joint) driving variable in EFP, and this was emphasised time and time again by officials working on EU foreign policy (Interviews with EEAS Officials, 2, 6 & 16 June 2014, telephone). Of course we are aware of the potential realist argument that the will and ability to pursue ideational goals are a product of relative power, even if actors are unaware of it, but we think that greater explanatory power can be gained by considering principled beliefs as a separate category. After all, this allows us to be more precise in our analysis and more sensitive to the reality of policymaking.

It must be added here that the challenges to this part of our hypothesis have been greater than those that were identified in the material realm. This was most evidently the case with the UfM, which could be envisioned as consistent (or at least *not inconsistent*) with economic interests but where a connection to principled beliefs was almost entirely absent. Moreover, the growing focus on JHA over the course of Euro-Med relations as considered in this thesis clashed primarily with the human rights and democracy dimension, as strengthened cooperation with incumbent regimes on anti-terrorism and immigration appeared *at best* as unhelpful in promoting a more tolerant political climate. Finally, in all three of our case studies the political dimension was less

prevalent than the economic side of EFP. This was true for the EMP, and with some corrections it persisted in the ENP. In both cases we did not find smoking gun evidence to support the hypothesised necessary role of principled beliefs, but we did find hoop and straw in the wind evidence to do so. Only in the case of the UfM did we fail to find hoop evidence, leading to a partial rejection of this element of our hypothesis. The overall conclusion as regards principled beliefs is therefore that evidence can be found to support the argument that they are a necessary variable, allowing our hypothesis to pass the third test, but it is a narrow pass as a number of challenges coalesce to weaken the overall strength of the supporting evidence.

The normative approach to EFP thus appears to explain a more limited range than the materialist approach – notably this is exactly opposite to the conclusion reached by Attinà (2003). Yet more importantly, our findings clearly indicate that in isolation neither variable explains things fully. This allows us to consider the fourth question/test that was posited: do principled beliefs and economic interests jointly account sufficiently for the EU's policies towards the MENA? At the outset we must acknowledge that this is a highly ambitious question given the general difficulty in finding 'sufficient' explanations in social science research (Mahoney, 2012). Owing to the complexity of the topic and the wide variety of potentially relevant variables, it seems almost impossible to reach a confident conclusion on this score. This is why we have argued that we will at best be able to present straw in the wind evidence in support of our hypothesis. Such evidence would point to a hypothesis' general likelihood or feasibility, but it would not *prove* it. In the case of this research this is all the more so given the breadth of our hypothesis as well as its 'staggered' nature, as it is built on various constitutive elements drawn from differing theoretical perspectives. So where does this leave us?

Taking a bird's eye perspective on the 15 years of EU policies considered in this thesis, our conclusion is that the hypothesis that was tested was highly applicable to the EU's earlier policies but lost some of its explanatory force as time passed. In other words, the sufficiency of principled beliefs and economic interests to jointly account for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the earlier forms of the European Neighbourhood Policy is greater than for more recent behaviour. We found that there was strong coexistence as well as a degree of interplay between the two variables, with each setting broad limits for the scope and content of EU policy. Economic interests determined much of what the EU did and wanted, but we did not see a heedless pursuit of economic interests without regard for democracy and human rights. Conversely, it was noticed that although principled beliefs drove the creation of various European initiatives, the strength of the EU's emphasis on political change was in some cases clearly delimited by economic interests. Thus, the main conclusion that can be drawn from our research is that EU foreign policy towards the Mediterranean was neither an example of how norms and values lead to the transcendence of self-interests nor a case of disingenuous normative packaging. Instead EU engagement with the MENA has been much more complex; what it represents is a marriage of differing objectives under the explicit belief that they can be pursued in conjunction with one another. This reciprocally facilitative logic can be said to undermine a bifurcation between theoretically polarised accounts of Euro-Med relations. By focusing on manifestations of one or the other dynamic, they overlook the very pivot upon which the EMP and the ENP were founded: the nexus between economic interests and principled beliefs found in the causal beliefs that have served as the EU's roadmap.

**Table 22: Hypothesis fit and challenges**

	<b>What our hypothesis explains</b>	<b>Key challenges</b>
<b>EMP</b>	Accounts for the integration of economic policies with the spread of European ideals in the Barcelona Process; clarifies how the EU believed in a win-win scenario for north and south.	Challenged by disagreement between EU member states on deeper-going measures to pursue collective economic interests
<b>ENP</b>	Explains the rebalancing of measures in the ENP, including the greater prominence of political reform as well as the prospects offered for deeper economic integration.	Emergent practices in the JHA domain could not be traced directly to independent variables.
<b>UfM</b>	Explains emergence of the UfM in light of difficulties with achieving earlier goals.	As above; UfM more distant to both economic and ideational goals; strategic dilution.

Whilst our findings provide substantive support for the hypothesis, as indicated in table 22 some important ‘spoilers’ were uncovered. Perhaps most important is the rising importance of JHA-related policies, particularly with regards to anti-terrorism and immigration. It would go too far to say that these topics have overshadowed the entire field of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, which is why we do not think our hypothesis ought to be rejected, but clearly the more reactive nature of decision making seen particularly since 2008 poses some challenges to our approach. In essence this can be related to the fact that our hypothesis builds upon existing work in which the EU is presumed to have, at least to some extent, a purposive, pro-active foreign policy (this is

inherent to both the realist pursuit of self-interest as well as the idealist transmission of normative values). As our hypothesis states, a prerequisite for this to be possible is a clearly defined set of causal beliefs to serve as a transmitting (causal) mechanism. Yet what this thesis has found is that the EU's transmission belt has slowly corroded, hampering its ability to take strategic action and leading to a focus on less far-reaching objectives that deal with problems such as immigration on a more immediate level. In other words; whereas it was expected that the Barcelona Process would promote prosperity and thereby reduce migratory pressures and political instability, the negative results inevitably reduced faith in the EU's abilities and impelled a more immediate solution to some of the worsening problems. In this regard our model for EU policy is very helpful to explain what happened, even though the hypothesised drivers did not cover the inputs into the process fully.

A further obstacle has been encountered in intra-EU divisions, which have affected primarily the EU's ability to pursue economic interests in a strong manner. In this sense we have drawn attention to the divergence between absolute and relative gains; traces of both were clearly present in the evidence, but the mix was often unproductive. Whilst the European Commission typically highlighted the absolute gains of e.g. a Mediterranean investment bank as a full subsidiary of the EIB or a relaxation of visa policies, member states could not agree and focused on their relative gains vis-à-vis competing objectives and actors. Another example was found in agricultural and services liberalisation, for despite the potential of mutual benefits there were particular vested interests within the EU that made it extremely difficult to move forward. As a result, the EU has been unable to pursue 'offensive' economic interests to the fullest extent, resulting in a sometimes unhappy mix with 'defensive' interests. This does not undermine our hypothesis as such, but it raises questions on the particulars of our



independent variable of economic interests, which does not appear as especially ‘independent’ in this light. In addition we have seen that in our interviews with EU officials disagreement between member states was often highlighted as a key challenge to greater European effectiveness in the Mediterranean region (see above). The upshot is that if we wish to explain EU policy, a blanket reference to ‘economic interests’ does not fully suffice. Though the EU’s behaviour in the economic realm has been fairly consistently in line with a broad interest in economic expansion, many of the details have proven to be contingent upon political circumstances.

Returning to our fourth test, in many ways the issue of ‘sufficiency’ appears to be one of focus or level of analysis. At a higher and thus more abstract level the feasibility of our hypothesis is greater than at a more zoomed-in level, where endless variations and intervening variables can be observed. This leads to the observation that sufficiency in social science research is somewhat of an arbitrary concept, given the amount of judgement required in determining what level of explanation is satisfactorily comprehensive. In the case of the hypothesis reviewed here, we do not think that our evidence allows for a strong claim in support. Yet we do not believe that our hypothesis ought to be rejected either; rather we point to the substantive benefits enjoyed by our comprehensive approach and suggest further refining and research as the best way forward.

In conclusion, to answer our research question – *What drives the EU’s policies towards the MENA; European ideas, the EU’s material interests, or some combination of both?* – we can say on the basis of strong evidence that neither ideas nor material interests in isolation provide a good explanation for the behaviour we observed. Instead, an evolving mix of both has been found to drive the EU’s policies, linked by a set of causal beliefs that has guided coexistence between differing objectives and interests.

Thus, what is striking is the combination of drivers rather than the superiority of one over the other. To this we must add that the lack of efficacy in the EU's approach has weakened both the material and ideational elements in EFP, creating a situation characterised by a lack of strategic clarity. Yet within this murky and highly complex process, which we have endeavoured as much as possible to unravel, material interests and principled beliefs have held enduring relevance, running through EU policies as a red thread of sorts. The ups and downs that were witnessed notwithstanding, it is most likely that the EU's engagement with the MENA will continue to be marked by efforts to find mutually facilitative arrangements between the two dimensions.

### ***Wider Implications***

#### **Theoretical Implications**

In view of the above it can be said that this study speaks to a number of debates within the fields of EU foreign policy analysis and International Relations. To begin with the former, the debate on the 'nature' of the EU as an international actor has been addressed head-on, as we have continuously sought to position our findings within the literature on this topic. It is interesting to note that since work on this thesis was first undertaken several studies have been published that support our call for a wider theoretical view on EU foreign policy. A representative example is a special issue of the *European Foreign Affairs Review* that proposes a 'post-normative' perspective on European policy towards the Middle East and North Africa, with a focus on the pragmatic mediation between values and interests. Its argument is that "... the debate about the EU as an international actor has to move beyond the simplistic notion of normative power and arguments about its theoretical validity to the premise that the EU does not possess per se a specific nature or ethos" (Cavatorta & Pace, 2010, p. 582). Another example can be found in a

special issue of the *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, edited by Kerremans and Orbie (2013), which seeks to facilitate debate between different paradigmatic perspectives on EU trade policy.

This thesis adds support to the exploration of broadened perspectives and exhibits one way of achieving theoretical synthesis. One of our most important contributions has been to demonstrate, on the basis of extensive empirical research, that characterising the EU as a particular ‘kind’ of actor almost inevitably leads to a reduced ability to account for the various complexities seen in its real-world behaviour. The EU has consistently defied characterisation, and it is not evident that continued efforts to this purpose will yield explanatory advances. This points to the need for a more pragmatic view on how the EU manifests itself in international affairs – Steve Wood’s discussion of ‘pragmatic power Europe’ (2011) is a recent example that resonates with this argument (see also Youngs, 2010). A useful way to undertake studies of the kind referred to here would be to focus on the interconnections between differing functional fields (such as the EMP’s baskets, as considered in this thesis), rather than to analyse only e.g. economic or human rights policies. In isolation, consideration of such fields might lend support to a specific characterisation of EFP, but if charges of selection bias or inconsistencies between expectations and outcomes are to be avoided it will be highly useful to adopt a thematically inclusive perspective on how the EU’s various actions fit together.

One significant contemporary debate that is worth mentioning in this place revolves around the suggestion of ‘normative power as hegemony’, which has been proposed as a resolution to some of the problems inherent to the normative power conceptualisation – especially the entanglement of prescription and description as well as the perceived inconsistency of the EU (Diez, 2013). This can be seen in parallel with

efforts to analyse the EU in terms of imperial power (Zielonka, 2013; Sepos, 2013). These works can be seen as theorisations seeking to define a more nuanced view on the relationship between different kinds of power in EFP, and as argued in this thesis this could be highly useful in providing thoughtful explanations of EU policy. Yet while it is clear that several characteristics of a hegemonic or imperial situation exist in the case of EU-MENA relations (particularly in terms of the EU's economic weight), we have found that an imperial perspective overestimates, at least in the case of the MENA, the challenges encountered in EU foreign policy making. These challenges have hampered the scope, depth and impact of EU policy. Resultantly, it seems a slight overstatement to term the EU as a hegemonic or imperial actor, as the EU has been unable to force or persuade actors towards a specific model of governance in Euro-Med relations. This highlights how an imperial/hegemonic perspective captures a significant part of the analytical picture but leaves *capability* and *impact* relatively unaccounted for. Thus, whilst addressing certain theoretical problems, an imperial/hegemonic paradigm does not appear as a perfect fit with EFP. Once again this underscores the importance of a relatively pragmatic application of theoretical concepts, given the EU's persistent tendency to defy neat characterisation. Moreover, our findings provide a platform from which to urge scholars to pay careful attention to the ways in which EU policies play out on the ground in their efforts to theorise EFP.

Taking the discussion a bit broader; what are the 'lessons learned' from this study for wider theorising on ideational-material interaction? After all, as we have repeatedly stressed, the two perspectives taken as the basis for our hypothesis are not *wrong*; rather they have been shown to be insufficient to provide a satisfactory explanation for EFP. Our argument is that rather than asking whether *either* ideas *or* material variables are more important, it is more useful to ask *how* they coexist. Below

we present a number of recommendations on how this can be undertaken in future research.

First of all, if collaboration between ideational and material perspectives is to be taken further, it is absolutely vital to be clear about the distinction between *ideas* and *ideals*. This touches upon the criticisms expressed by realists as early as E.H. Carr (1995) on the obfuscation between analysis and normative prescription in ‘idealist’ or ‘utopian’ scholarship. Modern-day constructivists – including NPE scholars (see Diez, 2013) – have at times been vulnerable to similar critiques (see Onuf, 2001). Most importantly, their analyses are sometimes undertaken in ways that showcase insufficient acknowledgement of the role played by power in the international realm.<sup>157</sup> Furthermore, it is not always made sufficiently clear to what extent constructivist analysis is informed by a liberal-idealist worldview, as studies of e.g. EU normative power often appear to favour the type of liberal norms they investigate and exhibit a Kantian belief that their spread will ultimately benefit international progress and stability. Whilst there is certainly room for ‘EUtopian’ scholarship (Nicolaïdis & Howse, 2002), implicit normative investment in liberal ideals and obfuscation between prescription and description can weaken the analytical prowess of constructivist research and leave authors vulnerable to charges of naiveté. The clearest illustration of this problematic is the often expressed prediction that the EU will change the nature of international relations *for the better* (Smith, 2003), which evinces a commitment to liberal norms in very much the same vein as the Wilsonian utopians that were the focus

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<sup>157</sup> In addition to the realist critique, postmodern and feminist authors have expressed similar concerns about constructivism. See Locher & Prugl, 2001.

of criticism from e.g. Carr (1995) and Morgenthau (1985). As a result constructivist approaches sometimes appear as *idealist* rather than *ideational*.<sup>158</sup>

In this light, a core prerequisite for further study on the coexistence between material and ideational variables is to be reflective and explicit about normative commitments and to make a clear distinction between ideas and ideals. The upshot is that analysts who aim to explore interconnections must strive as much as possible to forego adjudging the ideational dynamics they study as desirable or good, or at a minimum make it explicit whenever they do so. This does not mean that research on the potentially transformational powers of ideas should be given up altogether, but it does imply that if material and ideational forces are to be studied in conjunction judgment must be withheld as to whether transformations occur towards a morally improved state of international conduct.<sup>159</sup> In other words: it should not be assumed that the spread of liberal norms will diminish the role of power in international affairs, as has sometimes been argued in research on the EU.

A second point that can be drawn from our analysis of ideational and material variables in EFP is the need for clarity on the degree to which the study of material

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<sup>158</sup> Barkin's discussion (2003) of the distinction to be made between 'idealist constructivism' and 'realist constructivism' resonates neatly with this argument.

<sup>159</sup> It may be added here that, in our view, a particularly interesting area of research on ideas concerns the systems and processes that produce consensus amongst policy makers, e.g. the 'Washington Consensus' noted in this thesis. In this light, Judith Goldstein has argued that "continued support for the liberal economic regime is a function of the acceptance by the policymaking community of a set of rules and norms" (1986, p. 180), but there is still room to determine what specific mechanisms facilitate such convergence. In this respect critical works (e.g. inspired by Gramsci) could play a useful role (see Scherrer, 2001). In addition, work on epistemic communities – argued to be the "the transmission belts by which new knowledge is developed and transmitted to decision-makers" (Haas, 2004, p. 587) – could continue to make a contribution to academic understanding of the topic, especially if they can foster greater cognisance of the interlinkage between epistemic communities and pre-existing material interests (Naomi Klein's analysis [2007] of neoliberalism and the Chicago School of economics is a prominent non-academic example).

power incorporates positivist or empiricist assumptions. Particularly neorealism has been vulnerable to charges of being too reliant on positivism (Ashley, 1984), especially in view of its abstract rationalism as evinced in game-theoretic modelling and a disinterest in agency (*vis-à-vis* structure). Evidently this clashes with the study of ideas as well as the constructivist (and postpositivist) arguments that knowledge does not exist independent from observation and that there is no objective rationalism that can be generalised for all circumstances (this also pertains to the ‘logic of consequence’ vs. ‘logic of appropriateness’ debate [see Müller, 2004]). In this thesis the dilemma has been resolved with what has been termed a ‘soft rationalist’ approach, which does not rely on a strict adherence to rational choice theory but instead takes a more context-sensitive view on how strategies are decided (placing, as we have said in Chapter II, rational actors in a socially constructed world).

Thus, whereas the interlinkage between liberal ideals and the study of ideas must necessarily be suspended to enable theorising on ideational-material coexistence, it is also necessary to interrupt the association of positivism and abstract rational choice with the study of material forces. This implies that assumptions regarding the ‘independent’ effects of material forces should be treated with a high degree of suspicion.

This leads us to our third and final recommendation. In view of the theoretical framework applied in this study and the empirical findings that were generated, it appears that the greatest value can be gained from research on ideas and material forces if consideration of the latter is applied as a corrective to analysis of the former. That is to say: the beliefs and aspirations of actors should not be taken at face value, and consideration of material forces can serve as a highly useful way to prevent falling into some of the ‘naiveté traps’ that were identified previously. A balanced theoretical view should thus recognise the importance of ideas in shaping actors’ behaviour, but it should

also remain vigilant about the ‘tragic’ consequences that material forces might have on even the best of intentions. It is not necessary to assume that *all* actors are *always* self-interested, but the fact that *some* actors might *sometimes* be is sufficient to warrant continual awareness of material interests. Explicit acknowledgement and theoretical incorporation of material dynamics could thus act as a significant corrective force in analyses of the role of ideas in IR.

It is worth noting that the perspective outlined above comes very close to what classical realists like Carr (1995), Morgenthau (1985) and Niebuhr (2005) have argued, as they have often emphasised the tragic nature of international relations (see Chapter II). Niebuhr, for example, insisted that a responsible view “must know the power of self-interest in human society without giving it moral justification” (2005, p. 41). Thus, in our view a fruitful approach towards the study of ideational and material dynamics will recognise the vital role played by ideas in directing action and informing the formation of interests in international relations, but consideration of material forces and self-interest remains a necessary, corrective part of theorising. If this complex balancing act can be successfully performed, analysts will be able to continue to advance fundamental theoretical and empirical understandings of one of the most important and persistent topics in the discipline of IR.

### **Practical Implications of this Study**

Now that we have considered our findings and the theoretical ‘lessons learned’, it is important to discuss what the practical implications of our research are. In this regard perhaps our most important finding has been the ‘strategic confusion’ observed in the more recent manifestations of EU policy towards the MENA. It is interesting to note a degree of alignment between our conclusions and Federica Bicchì’s argument regarding the amount of uncertainty historically present in the EU with regards to the southern



neighbourhood (2007). As we have shown, none of the answers given by the EU to the problems of poverty, instability and oppression in the MENA produced the desired outcomes, leading to a progressively increasing amount of uncertainty about what should be done. As we have said, this affected the causal beliefs that served as the connectors between the inputs and outputs of the policy process; leading to a somewhat disjointed overall image towards the end of the 2000s. It can be said that this somewhat undermines e.g. Dannreuther's argument for considering the EU's MENA policies as a 'regime building' exercise (2007).<sup>160</sup> Elements of this characterisation have certainly been present, but the gradual loss of a perspective towards a recognisable end-goal does not suggest that a fleshed out, conscious effort at constructing a comprehensive regime could be identified.

As we have seen in our chapter on the UfM, critics of EU policy have been quite vocal in expressing their disappointments with recent developments. As one observer states: "In practice, the Union has frequently preferred immediate stability in the south, and thus authoritarian rule and repression, to slow and possibly messy regime transformation" (Kienle, 2009, p. 10). Similarly, Richard Youngs has spoken of 'pragmatic cosmopolitanism' to define the EU's policies (2010), suggesting that there has been a retreat from liberal internationalism towards a more pragmatic stance (see also Wood, 2011). This certainly coincides with the findings of our research, and one of the factors that we have highlighted to explain this situation has been the uncertainty that existed over the policy measures and instruments that would enable progress in the

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<sup>160</sup> As he writes, the "particular 'Middle East regime' which Europe seeks to develop is one where international behavior, including most notably that of the US, converges on the need for a multilateral and institutionalized approach"; such a regime "must be the core foundation block for breeding the mutual respect and trust in the Middle East required for a long-lasting peace and prosperity" (Dannreuther, 2007, p. 52).

MENA. Somewhat provocatively put, what we have seen in this thesis is that the neoliberal approach to the relationship between economics and politics, since its moment of glory in the 1990s, has not fulfilled the promise of bringing more prosperity and freedom. But what is to serve in its place? As the Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek has argued, although Fukuyama's thesis on the 'end of history' (1992) is nowadays mostly ignored, there was a certain element of truth to it, as there are currently no substantial alternatives to the politico-economic view that was implemented in many countries, the MENA included, after the disintegration of the Soviet Union (Žižek, 2001). Euro-Mediterranean relations seem to be a good illustration of this analysis.

Against this backdrop the Arab Spring appears as an almost natural eruption of the tensions that had built up over many years of politico-economic stagnation and regression. While some actors were unrepentant – such as Tony Blair, as cited in Chapter V – others called for European 'humility' (Štefan Füle, cited in EU Observer, 2011) and argued that the choice between short-term stability and deeper reform had proven to be false. UK Prime Minister David Cameron thus argued: "As recent events have confirmed, denying people their basic rights does not preserve stability, rather the reverse" (cited in Financial Times, 2011). This illustrates that, whilst the lack of positive results in the EMP and ENP had facilitated a gradual drift towards a mostly status quo-ist disposition, the Arab Spring appears to have provided a significant counterincentive for a recalibration in EFP towards transformational efforts. Many of the officials interviewed for this thesis argued that exactly this had been the lesson of the Arab Spring, as it revealed the importance of deeper reforms across the political and economic spectrum (Interviews with EEAS Officials, 2, 6 & 16 June 2014, telephone). However, in view of recent developments it is not clear to what extent the EU has been

able to give expression to this insight by formulating a genuinely new approach that would allow it to sidestep the internal and external problems experienced previously (despite the creation of the EEAS to spearhead foreign policy [see van Hoonacker & Pomorska, 2013]).

The Commission's latest major documents – the proposed 'Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity' and the 'New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood' (European Commission, 2011d; 2011e; see also European Parliament, 2011c) – take some steps in this direction, as they currently serve as the chief guiding documents on engagement with the MENA (they were reportedly formulated in "absolute record time", as one of our interviewees said [Interview with EEAS Official, 3 June 2014, telephone]). Most importantly, the EU has promised to give 'more for more': i.e. more assistance and enhanced mobility in return for more reform, with as a concrete manifestation the Union's SPRING programme (Support for Partnership Reform and Inclusive Growth). The programme's intention is to signal Europe's support to Mediterranean countries "that show a true commitment to democratic reforms" (European Union, 2012, p. 54), with so-called mobility partnerships (visas) and free trade as the flagship features (ibid.). Ambiguity persists regarding the extent to which this would be realisable given prior challenges, and despite increased European financing progress has been regarded as unsatisfactory (Interview with EEAS Official, 3 June 2014, telephone). Overall the EU's recent efforts have been almost entirely dependent on the willingness of MENA partners to cooperate, which explains why currently only Morocco has made 'good progress', while further steps are in the works with Jordan, Tunisia and potentially Egypt (ibid.). This makes it difficult to evaluate the concrete successes and failures of EU policy following the Arab Spring,

Beyond these observations, our findings urge caution regarding the expectation of a European volte-face. Throughout the recent history of Euro-Med relations there have been several Commission proposals for enhancements of European support, but many of them were later downscaled owing to member state disagreements. As shown in this thesis, high-level declarations of common interests between north and south necessarily ignore the many more substantial areas of competition as well as the sacrifices that are required to follow a genuinely transformational line, thus raising doubt over their operational value. Financial constraints and intra-European divergences generally prevent a truly radical departure from past practice, and though we would like to recommend an opening up of GATS Mode 4 exchanges (presence of natural persons), deeper European liberalisation of agricultural trade, or the creation of a subsidiary of the EIB for the Mediterranean, domestic trends in the member states pose a considerable barrier against such measures, despite their inclusion in the SPRING programme.

Broadly speaking, however, it is possible to identify a number of areas where improvement could and should be made. First is the absence, since the 2010 FTZ goal was given up, of a clear strategic horizon. The introduction of the UfM seems to have further fragmented Europe's approach, and though it was perhaps overly ambitious the initial Barcelona Process did contain a clear strategic, long-term outlook. Such forward-looking thinking now seems to have disappeared from view, perhaps understandably so given the failures of earlier efforts and the further uncertainties of the Arab Spring. Yet the current situation also offers a good opportunity to respond to the necessity of defining more specifically what Europe's vision for the region is. The Commission's latest proposals in terms of 'more for more' falls short of doing so, and the 'advanced partnership' status of Morocco and Jordan also does not seem to be a particularly well-

defined concept. Thus, improved strategic thinking – striking a more realistic balance between the EMP’s original ambitions, the EU’s actual abilities, and concerns shared with the MENA states – will be indispensable for the future of Euro-Med relations. (We may recall here Martin Wight’s useful insight that “realism can be a very good thing, it all depends whether it means the abandonment of high ideals or of foolish expectation” [1978, p. 294].)

Second, it is worth re-emphasising that there is simply speaking a need for new ideas. The European Union has been prescribing economic policies inspired by the neoliberal economic vision for decades, so far with little result. In fact, the two states where the Arab Spring kicked off, Egypt and Tunisia, were at the forefront of economic liberalisation and privatisation, to the extent that one Egyptian writer speaks of ‘a revolution against neoliberalism’ (Al Jazeera, 2011b). For this reason it is absolutely vital to break away from the orthodoxies that have informed the region’s economic reform policies, but this is likely to be a difficult task. As we have said, ‘the end of history’ has not yet been replaced with a new perspective, and the struggle to redefine the nature of the West’s politico-economic makeup is in full swing within the EU itself – as evinced by 2014’s European Parliamentary elections. It is expected that the EU’s approach towards the MENA will follow the tidings of history in a manner similar to how it reflected economic views prevalent in the 1990s. An important and fascinating task lies here for scholars in the fields of politics, economics and political philosophy to imagine alternatives.

A final site of EFP that is relevant from our perspective is the Israeli-Palestinian situation. A strong and united position is desirable, but here too the indicators point to the difficulty of breaking free from the confines of past (failed) efforts. After all, it seems difficult nowadays to speak of a genuine ‘peace process’, and though European

officials interviewed for this thesis fully admitted the lack of opportunity offered by the existing status quo – one high-level interviewee even conceded that Edward Said’s critique of Oslo “was probably correct all along” (Interview in Jerusalem, 21 October 2010) – the European Union has been slow to respond. Altogether there appears to be little room to manoeuvre. For example, after a confidential European report critical of Israeli settlement policies was leaked early in 2012, several EU-funded renewable energy projects in the West Bank were put on the Israeli government’s demolition list (EurActiv, 2012). As other controversies have shown – most importantly the proposal for an agreement on ‘Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products’ with Israel<sup>161</sup> – it has been extremely difficult for the EU to find a consistent line: ‘declarative condemnations on the one hand, economic rewards on the other’, as one European diplomat argued (The Guardian, 2012). In a broader sense this could be said to symbolise Europe’s challenge in remaining both relevant and effective and to fully utilise its political and economic tools to positively influence the behaviour of external actors in a highly problematic neighbouring region.

The above also touches upon the challenges experienced in terms of promoting democracy abroad. Neither the United States’ more forceful approach (e.g. Iraq) nor the EU’s ‘bottom up’ approach have been proven to be greatly successful, which raises very serious questions about the extent to which external actors can positively stimulate democratic development. What primarily emerges from our research is that balanced use must be made of both leverage and linkage, to use the vocabulary of Lavenex & Schimmelfennig (2011). But in what specific combinations this should be undertaken

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<sup>161</sup> In essence the agreement provides for mutual acceptance of certified pharmaceutical products, but it was not without controversy given that it was argued by some to open the door to the certification of products from West Bank settlements and thereby to implicitly recognise Israeli jurisdiction over the area (European Parliament, 2012d).

depends on a range of contextual factors as well as the overall policy environment, which is why it would go beyond the scope of this research to seek further specification. Here, too, the Arab Spring provides a useful juncture to re-examine past efforts and to imagine future alternatives.

The most confident empirical advice that we can give in this light is to remain aware of what Hill famously called the European Union's 'capabilities-expectations gap' (1993) and to adopt a humble perspective on what could be achieved. This may seem self-evident to many scholars, but in a wider sense it deserves reiteration. For example, President of the European Council Herman van Rompuy said in response to the Arab Spring that "without Europe ... there will be no Arab summer!" (Van Rompuy, 2011). Or as the President of the European Parliament, Jerzy Buzek, said: "Europe has become a role model. The universal appeal of our values can be seen in our southern and eastern neighbourhoods ... This is not only a chance for peace, justice and a better life for these people – this is also our chance to make Europe shine in the world" (Buzek, 2011). We should remain wary of hubris, overconfidence and unrealistic ambitions here (especially in light of past failures), and in that respect we may recall the Amato Commission's recommendation for European policy towards the Balkans – suggesting that the Union must make a choice between "enlargement or empire" if it wishes to positively shape the regional situation (International Commission on the Balkans, 2005, p. 11). Enlargement is evidently not on the table for the Middle East and North Africa, and one the lessons of this thesis is that 'empire' is certainly also beyond the scope of the European Union's current capabilities or intentions. What we are left with is oscillation between various drivers, material and ideational, acting sometimes in concert and sometimes in competition. It is to be hoped that the EU will be able to define a fruitful synthesis between these dynamics for future policy, both to pursue its

own goals and to optimally contribute to the social, political and economic advancement of an important set of neighbouring countries.



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# Appendix A – Interview Questions

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Given the format that was utilised (semi-structured), the questions provided below served primarily as a ‘jumping board’ for in-depth interviews with EEAS officials (lasting between 45 minutes and 1.5 hours). To be clear: not all questions were used in all cases (in reflection of the specific areas of responsibility and knowledge of the interviewees).

## *Part A – Personal Background*

1. Please describe your function and its key responsibilities;
2. What, in your experience, are the key opportunities and challenges specific to your job?

## *Part B – EMP/ENP/UfM/IFIs*

3. In your view, what are the main goals (drivers) of the EMP/ENP/UfM (focus dependent on responsibilities and experience)? What are the main challenges/achievements?
4. Do you think there has been progress (or evolution) in Euro-Med relations since the Barcelona Declaration? (If yes; how do the ENP and UfM fit into this trajectory?)
5. How do you perceive the role of the IFIs (World Bank, IMF) in the MENA region; what is their specific added value?
6. Since the first IMF loans to Med countries in the 1980s, what do you think have been the major changes in the approach to economic reform? (e.g. departure from ‘Washington consensus’?)

7. What are your thoughts on some of the criticisms levelled at e.g. the IMF (for example that structural adjustment enhanced, rather than limited, authoritarianism)?
8. How, in your view, do the EU and the IFIs complement each other's work in the MENA?
9. Are there areas/issues where the EU's and the IFIs' approaches diverge?

*Part C – Euro-Med relations (big picture)*

10. What, in your view, are the most important topics in Euro-Med relations (on the strategic level)? What are the most important challenges?
11. Do you think there is any tension between the EU's various objectives? (e.g. human rights and economic cooperation)
12. Do you think that the different EU institutions and frameworks cooperate effectively in their MENA policy?
13. What could (or should) the EU do to further improve Euro-Med relations in the future?

*Part D – To conclude*

14. Finally, would you like to highlight any areas not yet discussed which you think are important, or clarify something said previously?